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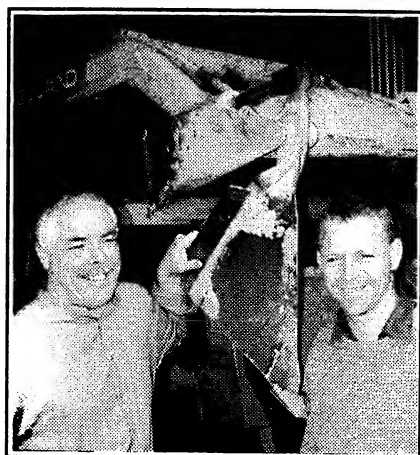


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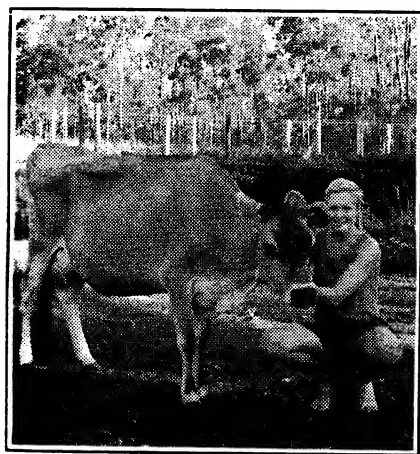
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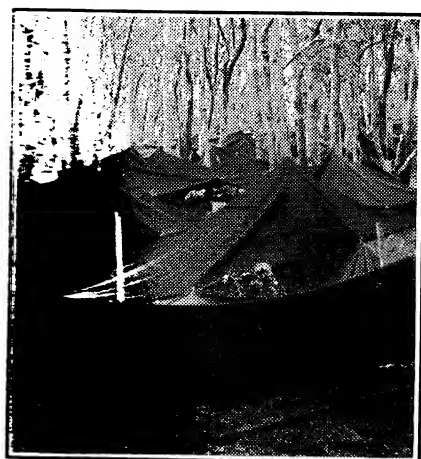
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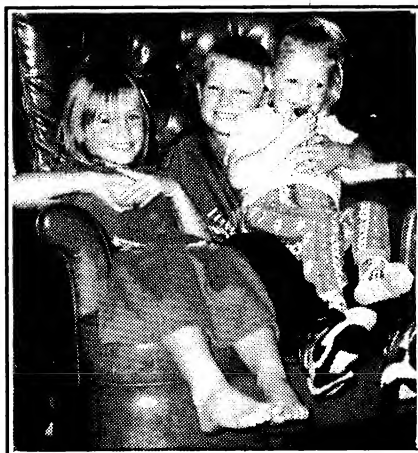
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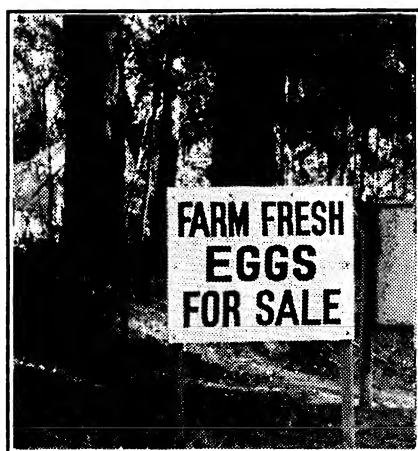
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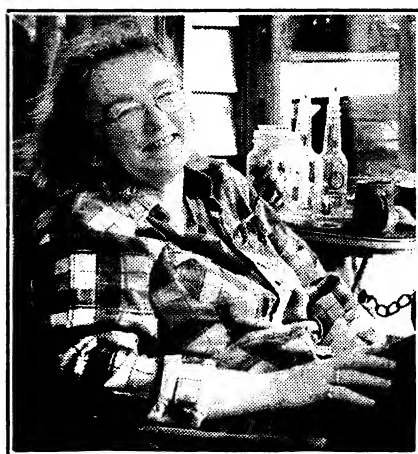
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## COVER PHOTOS

**Front Cover:** Yvonne Werner with a handful of one year old ginseng rootlings from her raised mulch beds. These look like half a matchstick and, after transplanting, will produce a mature root of valuable ginseng at seven years of age. See Growing Ginseng on page 19.

**Back Cover:** A picture glimpsed one day on our travels. This wonderful symbol of Australia's urban and rural culture has figured in the lifestyle of many *Grass Roots* readers.

Edited by Megg Miller and Mary Horsfall.

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We're still working away in our old office with outdoor animal noises providing a rural background for phone calls and possums wreaking havoc after hours. The latter species are without conscience. The most recent offence is a suspicious looking 'trail' on Mary's mat. Odious! It is probably just as well we're going soon, ideas for retribution are becoming dirty. Goodness knows why they are not content to stay in the wall. No, they gnaw through and then create a mess. I came in one weekend and found pages and books scattered everywhere. The entrance hole was duly located and covered over, now 'Houdini' has established another. Those of us who have offices adjoining end walls have to listen to these critters scratch and pass wind all day. During wet weather a slight eau de possum pervades the atmosphere, which is most unpleasant.

Mary was working quietly in her office recently and thought the snuffling and scratching sounded closer than usual. With a deadline imminent there wasn't time to draw attention to the source of this irritant. Later, Shelley walked in to confer with Mary and noticed the snoozing head leaning over the side of a box on the top self. Yes, the 'gorgeous' little thing had moved into the GR library and made a bed for itself in a box of magazines. Obviously there is another hole to be located and covered in. We may miss our crowing rooster and even the occasional quack of the duck or contented chatter of geese, but I doubt anyone will be sorry to see the last of these lawless brush-tails.

Our move will take place in a few weeks time. It will be a big step for us, greater costs to carry, but also extra room to spread out and create order where chaos now reigns. The set-up of the new office will allow us all to be more efficient in the time we spend at GR. We all work part time and really value the opportunity to pursue other interests as well as producing *Grass Roots*. Unfortunately, this leaves little time for standing around talking and entertaining visitors. In fact, often work obligations exceed work hours and have to be tackled at home. At the risk of appearing unfriendly, can we be honest and say that there is really no provision for visitors with the hours we work. Drop us a line or fax through your requests or queries. The phone is staffed

Tuesdays to Fridays for general enquiries. I'm sure you will all appreciate our plight and understand the need for reclusive work habits.

Heavy teasing has come my way of late because twice I've been careless with radiators and only just averted a fire. I purchased two small cheap bar heaters when the air conditioners were crippled by frosty temperatures. They're not designed like the single-bar radiators of a few years back, these are very easy to tip over on their front.

I turned all the heaters on one cold morning so it would be nice and warm when the girls arrived, then went off to complete farm jobs. Luckily Helen was early arriving because smoke and a burning smell alerted her to the imminent danger. The second incident occurred after I leaned notes and a plastic folder up against the cold heater, intending to relocate them first thing next morning. When I sat down to order the events of the day the phone rang, and without thinking I leant down and switched on the power. A casual glance over my shoulder indicated flames. Instant action. No damage occurred (except to the heater), but the smell of burnt plastic lingered for hours. For safety's sake I've limited my do-gooding to switching on just the air conditioners and have dressed more warmly so I don't need a personal heater. People say things happen in three, well, I'm being very careful.

After almost five interesting and often unpredictable years of working with us, Kim has decided to see the world. She's starting with the enticing beaches of north Queensland, and then looking at other parts of Australia, but with itchy feet and a back pack, goodness knows where she will go then. She's been a good workmate and a colourful personality in the office. She's enjoyed shocking us, she's challenged all our cherished beliefs and been the first to offer empathy and understanding when problems have occurred. She arrived looking like a fragile, immaculate model, and she's leaving to go roughing it, to dabble her toes in clean seas and watch the sun rise in unpolluted skies. We hope she has gained an appreciation of the diversity of GR people and their world, and the importance of the values espoused in the magazine. We will all be sorry to see the flashy red car drive out



for the last time and will miss the clink-clink of the high heels around the office. We will also sorely miss her expertise and professional skills. I'm sure readers will join me in wishing Kim well for the future – lots of untouched golden beaches and sunny blue skies.

Still we continue to receive delightful letters and reader's stories savouring their relationship with *Grass Roots*. The opportunity for reflecting stimulated by this twenty-fifth year of publishing has provided wonderful stories for future issues and many personal letters just saying thank you. GR has given so much to so many – I'm sure what we hear about is only a tiny proportion of the networking that is quietly occurring between you all. Thank you once again for the kindness and generosity that is so freely given.

Amongst the reminiscence and occasional blasts from the past was an intriguing letter about the cover photo on GR 31. The writer, cleaning out a late cousin's house, discovered the cover photo in a frame and recognised it as her husband's brother. Charlie Kelly was riding the eleven year old house cow belonging to the writer's husband home, on a road in the Stoney Rises in western Victoria. The photo, we know, was taken by an acquaintance who snapped it during a visit to the area in the early eighties. GR is better than Sherlock Holmes for solving mysteries!

Before concluding, there are two challenges for our sleuths. A recent letter we've received has asked for an address for the American magazine *Mother Earth News*. Is it still being published? Is there a recent address? The second request is for current information about the Thermajig cooking pot that was mentioned in GR 95, in Feb/Mark 1993. We know someone, somewhere will be able to help. That's what *Grass Roots* is about, isn't it?

# COMPANY CAR TO FARM UTE

by Hattie Richards, St Lucia, Qld.

**A major concern for many families contemplating a move to the country is how the children will cope with the upheaval of what is a significant lifestyle change. Hattie Richard's story of her family's 'huge step', her involvement in and reactions to it, is both entertaining and enlightening. Solar power, organic farming, strawbale building and a composting toilet are new concepts Hattie now takes in her stride. Snakes in the toilet – now that's a different matter!**



The relocated house, now extended and remodelled and set amidst a burgeoning organic garden.

Nearly three years ago now my family and I took the huge step. We moved from the luscious green hills of the Southern Highlands, where my father had a normal job, to grow organic small crops on a scrubby backblock twelve kilometres from Childers.

My NSW friends thought I was the luckiest person alive, for they imagined the whole of Queensland to be, well, beautiful one day and perfect the next. In their minds I was moving to a tropical paradise where even school would be held on white sand under coconut palms while sipping cocktails. This wasn't quite the image I received when my family – Mum, Dad, Tom 18, Jess 19 and I 15 – all jumbled out of our second-hand bright yellow Ford Courier ute (slightly different from our previous exclusive Commodore company car) to cut

through a piece of old barbed wire fence into our new home.

We had been on several holidays to the land so it wasn't completely unfamiliar. The holiday before we moved, a second-hand house was moved on to the land. Mum and I had spent a week or so ripping out carpets and lino, leaving golden floorboards, and cutting pieces of plywood from the walls so that the beautiful weatherboards showed. The house didn't look great but it ended up respectable.

It was when the toilet arrived that I first began to worry. It didn't flush! I simply did not want to understand that it was hygienic, let alone that it wouldn't smell. The light in our toilet room is rather unfortunately exactly above the seat, so at night if you were unfortunate enough to glance in the wrong direction

you would see all the way down the three-metre pipe to a huge pile of you know what. On a few occasions I have accidentally dropped things down there – a hanky, five cent pieces and who knows what else, but on every occasion the value of the item has suddenly gone so low in my mind that I have never even contemplated getting it out.

Only one terrible incident has ever occurred with the toilet though, other than the fan breaking – pong! About a month after the toilet arrived we still weren't set up properly, so when it rained all the water went straight under the house. Unfortunately, that year it flooded and the river that crossed our house somehow dislodged the composting toilet storage container and pushed it over. Poo went everywhere! Poor old Mum and Dad had to clean it up and put



it back together. Luckily, it kept raining long enough to wash it all away.

We have solar power, which to my surprise works brilliantly. I have found that I can use my CD player and computer on it as well as the normal amount of lights. Dad still gets worried about the power running out so we have all become accustomed to turn off everything as soon as we finish with it – which is a good habit anyway – but even after a few overcast days the power does not seem to run out. We have two showers which are both very impressive. One is heated by solar and the other by our slow combustion stove.

That first Christmas holiday was hard work but fun. For the no-dig garden I was told we were having I seemed to dig thousands of holes – holes for pipes, holes for trees, gutters, pig sheds, the list was never ending – but hey, I am good at it now. We started our first kitchen garden which was new and exciting; it was a mandala which I would now swear by for practical and ornamental use.

Alas, the holidays ended. Tom and Jess went back to university and I started boarding school in Rockhampton, four hours away. At school I had to retrain myself to flush a toilet!

It wasn't until I left for a few months and then returned over and over again that I worked out how much effort and sheer perseverance my parents were putting into their dream organic lifestyle. On every visit there were new gardens, the house was improved, orchards popped up and fences appeared. It was a superb feeling to watch their hard work, and a little bit of mine, turn a piece of sandy land in the middle of the bush into an oasis.

Next came the kitchen. To my disbelief bales of straw appeared where most people would put the walls. Had the three little pigs not taught my parents that even wolves can blow down straw houses? As always, they didn't care what others thought of their ideas, and went ahead rendering the walls of their straw bale house, and once again they were successful. The house turned out very aesthetically pleasing as well as practical and I count myself very lucky to have witnessed and helped produce the first straw bale house in Australia.

We always have many animals around the farm. We have four beautiful milking cows which give us milk, cheese, yogurt, cottage cheese, butter and the most divine ice cream you will



Hattie and her mum Louise standing in the lush kitchen garden, which is only two years old.



Hattie with Isobelle the house cow. Behind them are peppers, and a trellis for chokos.

taste, as well as calves for meat. Two piglets are bought every now and then to fatten up slowly – yum! This time two years ago I would have cringed at even the thought of eating homegrown meat, especially meat that just minutes before was my so-called friend with a name. But it has now become just another part of life. It had seemed cruel to me to kill anything to eat and I chose not to think

about where bought meat came from, but I now comfort myself in the realisation of what a nice childhood our 'dinners-to-be' enjoy, so much nicer than that of animals in a factory or on a huge station.

In a way, you expect the life of a self-sufficient organic farmer to be somewhere close to poverty, but for breakfast every morning there are bacon and eggs, maybe a bit of fresh fruit if you want.

Lunch is bread and cheese, sun-dried tomatoes, chutneys, ham etc, while for dinner we have the best cuts of meat money could ever buy, only it tastes better. Homegrown food definitely does taste a lot better than any other, and the fact that it has no preservatives or growing steroids makes it go down extremely easily.

Of course, not everything is hunky dory all of the time. This summer snakes have become a terrible problem for me. For some reason everywhere that I go there seems to be a snake slithering towards me. On one occasion I was sitting on the toilet when towards me came a snake. I was so scared I would have wet

myself, but of course, because I was on a toilet, it would have been too sensible. I have never moved so fast in my life. In fact, I nearly stood on the snake I was in such a hurry. On another occasion we found a snake in the spare bedroom which ended up in my room. After that I didn't sleep in my room for several nights. All the snakes that dare enter our house end up in the same place – the bottom of the compost heap.

My father's old lifestyle left him a fiery tempered person, but soon after he moved to Queensland he relaxed considerably and now he is so calm his old life wouldn't even recognise him. It is changes such as this that make me be-

lieve that the organic life is as healthy as you can possibly get. For me the organic life is a bit slow at the moment, not enough late nights and too many early mornings. Before I can enjoy an organic lifestyle to the extent most people do I need to go out into the world and experience a bit of everything else. In a few days I am heading-off to Brisbane to do a Bachelor of Architecture at Queensland University, but I think I already have a slight advantage in the course because I have grown up with such open-minded parents who have proved that anything is possible with a bit of brains, brawn and perseverance. Such is my home!

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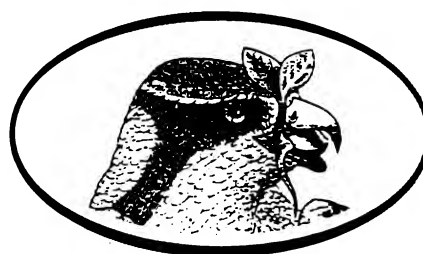
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# FIRST AID FOR PETS

by Pat Coleby, Maldon, Vic.

I get an astonishing number of calls about pets in grief of some kind or another. Regrettably, most of them are the result of wrong feeding, and I feel that if pet owners applied the same rules (within reason) to feeding their pets as they do to themselves things would go on better. One person said she fed her pet rice, which was great until as an after-thought I said: 'Brown rice?'

'Oh no!' was the reply. I was at a loss for words as I imagined everyone knew that white rice was a nonfood!

There are occasions however, when accidents occur to even the most well-cared for pet and emergency first aid is required.

The first step is to remove probable causes of accidents, barbed wire for example is not nice, or necessary, and should be avoided completely.

Accidents are not that frequent but the basics of first aid apply, especially the very important aspect of *staying calm*. If you are agitated the pet will be too. It's a bit like fear, which, to an animal actually smells (from the back of the neck), and if an animal senses you are afraid it will probably be the same and therefore dangerous.

A chihuahua that was brought to me after having been hit with a golf club by a child was in deep shock and had possible structural damage. The owner was making it worse if anything. I just held the dog against me to quiet the shaking while I first gave it some rescue remedy on its tongue, followed by an arnica pillule under same. Within minutes the dog relaxed, stopped shaking, and I was able to feel if the shoulder and neck were normal. After about fifteen minutes I returned it to the owner and suggested she keep it quiet for a couple of days after her veterinarian had checked it over. If an animal is tensed up and frightened it is quite difficult to help it.

An old book I have on homoeopathy says using arnica for calming the dog (or whatever) is paramount. Rescue remedy is now available over the counter at nearly all health shops and should always be handy – it's part of my handbag contents! Arnica drops or pillules – 200x

is an ideal strength for dealing with dogs or cats – will be obtainable from a vet who specialises in homoeopathy, or a homoeopath, and occasionally from a good health shop.

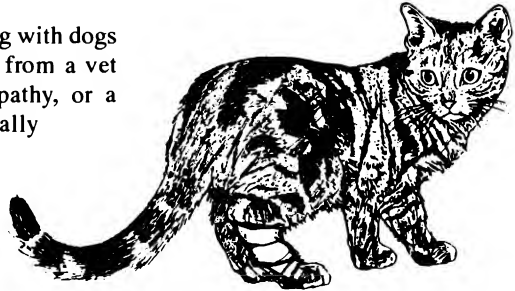
It should also be carried at all times. Pets often get traumatised when out with the family, not just at home.

Grass seeds in the eyes are a potent source of trouble. The eye should be examined very carefully if it is running, or if the dog is trying to rub it. If nothing is visible, turn back the eyelid and look, sometimes all that can be seen is a tiny hair-like bit of a grass seed or similar. Remove it carefully and put a couple of drops of cod-liver oil in the eye.

Thistles or hay seeds in paws and beside toe nails are usually best removed by the animal concerned; just check the area has not gone septic. An excellent first aid is to have a bottle of injectable vitamin C (sodium ascorbate), kept with a cork in, that can be poured onto a wound. It will clear up sepsis very quickly. When my terrier bitch had a grass seed that had worked its way into a salivary gland under her tongue and was extremely sore, the vet held her mouth open and I poured the liquid onto the inflamed area. Next morning it was normal so I could take her into the surgery to have the grass seed removed.

The danger with dogs and cats that are in great pain is that they will bite and/or scratch anyone who tries to handle them. European wasps have caused quite a few disasters. Always handle a small animal in that state by wrapping a towel around it, so it cannot bite or scratch. A handkerchief around the muzzle (not too tight) may save some grief too. Vets sell cloth muzzles these days and there should be one in the first-aid box.

To separate fighting dogs, water or pepper or voice of command sometimes works. Do *not* try to hit the ag-



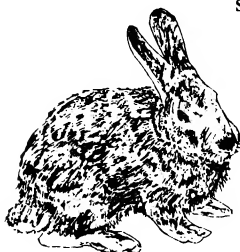
gressors with a blunt object as one always seems to hit the wrong dog! I have had to resuscitate a few of those. Avoid situations where fights can happen.

To help you deal with cases of poisoning read the sections in my book *Natural Pet Care* in advance. Anything that is to do with 1080, if the dog cannot be made to vomit in the first 20 minutes, is incurable. If it has vomited try to neutralise the terrible acidity of the sodium fluoride (1080) with pharmaceutical chalk or dolomite. If you cannot do this, the dog will die in agony four hours later. It must be shot or put down before that occurs.

Phosphorous poisons kill by burning in the presence of water; the patient must *not* be given liquids. White of egg and glucose is the only drink possible. Read it up before it happens!

Poisons of synthetic origin, such as organophosphates are another thing altogether. Vitamins A, C, E and zinc (as in seaweed meal or kelp tablets) are the only weapons according to Dr Kalokerinos. Some animals have been saved doing this, but it is extremely difficult to achieve. For all poisons, administration of vitamin E as oil or crushed tablets, vitamin A (and D) as cod-liver oil, dolomite or pharmaceutical chalk as a neutraliser, together with vitamin C as sodium ascorbate powder, is the best option. The latter placed straight on to a wasp or bee sting will help allay the pain. In all cases get the dog to the vet as soon as possible.

Cuts and abrasions need washing thoroughly, after which either let the dog keep the wound clean itself, or use one of the ointments listed below and bandage the area lightly. Sew the bandage on. If arnica is used, the dog will not feel too much pain and should leave the



## FIRST-AID BOX

- arnica
- rescue remedy
- cod-liver oil
- Iron phosphate cell salt tablets – good for wounds or eyes.
- sodium ascorbate powder,
- soft banadages
- Muzzle, a cloth kind that vets stock these days is useful.
- Comfrey ointment, without additives.
- Arnica ointment, without additives.
- Calendula ointment, without additives.

(Wintergreen is sometimes added to all the previous three ointments)

- Injectable Vitamin C. One bottle that can be kept corked if necessary, to use as above, and the other to be used as injections.

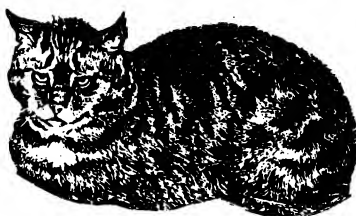
- Tweezers, for pulling thorns and seeds out – blunt ended; the plastic ones are best because they cannot hurt as much as metal ones if the animal struggles.

- A disinfectant liquid is needed for bad wounds, honey is an old (and effective) dressing – warm it before use. Most of the liquids such as metho, hydrogen peroxide etc sting very badly. But if the wound is bad enough often the patient cannot feel it.

One thing not to do, is to have one of my books and not read it before the trauma happens. You have to think these things through in advance.

Pat's book, *Natural Pet Care*, details all aspects of feeding and caring for dogs, rabbits, cats and caviés and is an invaluable guide for all pet owners. Available from: Grass Roots Publishing, PO Box 117, Seymour 3661. RRP \$18.45 posted.

## WINTER HEALTH HAZARD FOR CATS



Did you know winter can be a health hazard for your cat because sedentary indoor cats are more prone to urinary tract problems? Make sure your cat has an appropriate nutritious diet, continuous access to fresh water, clean litter trays, regular exercise and watch that he/she doesn't put on too much weight.

## REPEL ANIMALS FROM TREES

Mix together 600 ml water & 150 ml acrylic paint with five beaten eggs and paint the mixture on the trunks of trees that are at risk of having bark stripped by animals.

# AMCER

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# POURED EARTH CONSTRUCTION

by David Miller, Yea, Vic.

Steve Taylor started his working life as an apprentice fitter and turner, eventually graduating to become responsible for the maintenance of large buildings in the city. Both he and his wife Yvonne had grown up on the outskirts of Melbourne and as the city stretched outwards, they felt hemmed in by an artificial environment they did not like. Eventually, they decided to get out of the rat race so they headed north, finding a pretty spot near the top of a mountain range just off the Hume Highway. Here in the bush, they could live quietly and happily, yet not be too far away from everything.

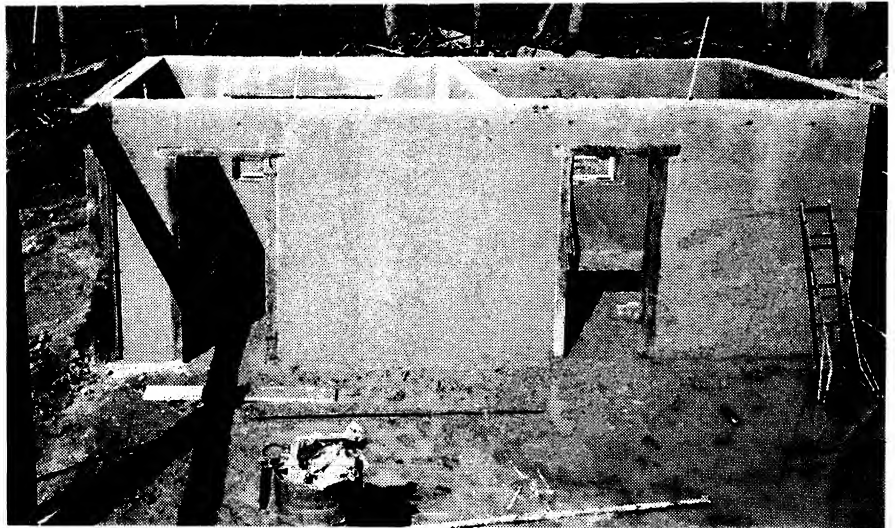
## DEGREES OF CHANGE

At first they just camped in a little shed on the property at weekends, getting a welcome break from city life. Next a steel garage was erected and they moved into this for a year or so while they built the house. The garage is now a machinery shed, but still supports the solar power system and protects the storage batteries and inverter that power the house.

Steve soon met the locals, which included another builder, Jeff Love. Steve and Jeff decided to get together to find work. The first house they built in the area was in a mission style using Besser blocks. This had a dome roof with rendered walls.

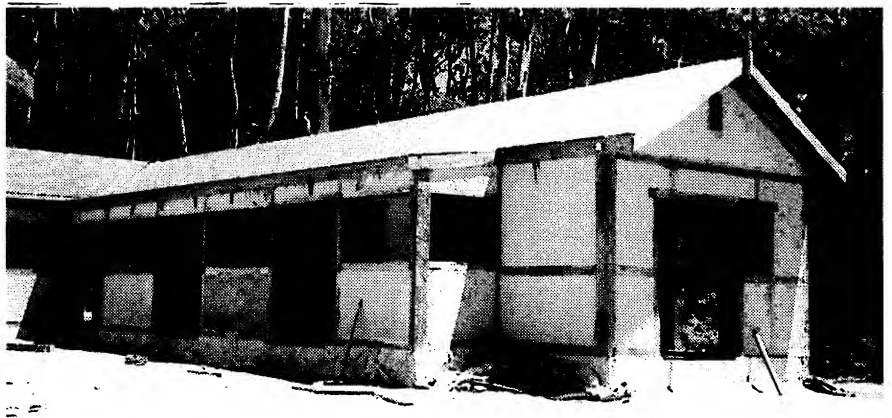
Steve and Jeff have always liked the solid, thick-walled masonry look on a house, and both had planned to build in stone to achieve this effect. They were well aware of the heavy work involved and their wives kept reminding them of the lack of speed builders have when working on their own homes, so they spent many hours trying to work out how to reduce construction time. They were deterred by the labour involved in making mud bricks, and kept thinking about one of Australia's oldest building methods – pisé or rammed earth.

This method involves the erection of forms into which earth is shovelled and then compacted to form the walls. Steve



**Above:** Poured earth construction is efficient. Once the forms are set up for the walls, mixing and pouring are all carried out by machine. This section, above, can easily be poured in a day.

**Below:** Part of Steve and Jeff's first poured earth construction. This house was a pole frame design, however, poured earth walls are strong and load bearing designs are the norm.



liked the idea of forms, but not the shovelling, or the many times you had to move the forms to complete a wall. This didn't deter him however, from working on a rammed earth house to see how the forms were used in practice, but the project still required more thought.

## A TECHNIQUE EVOLVED

Many books on building using formwork were read and the boys made forms at home in their spare time, experimenting with different earth mixes and

building walls wherever they could. They found the most difficult part of earth building was keeping the walls straight and level, and so tried to find a system where the complete wall could be built at once, rather than in small stages. They also wanted to avoid the multiple handling of building materials at every step.

It took one year to develop the form design to the point where it could be used to build a 2.4 metre wall. The weight and balance had to be appropriate

for lifting from one wall to another, and for moving from job to job. The strength had to be such that the wall did not bulge, but the forms were not too heavy. In 1992, a commercial set of forms was designed and made up. The structure was steel with thick ply on the sides so it could be replaced as it became worn and affected the wall surface. The forms were designed to build a 2.7 metre high wall in one pour.

Steve and Jeff then advertised their building method and gave a few seminars on poured earth to display how easy and quick the technique was in practice. They also built shed, garden and firebreak walls for people to test the forms and further demonstrate the building method.

### FIRST JOB

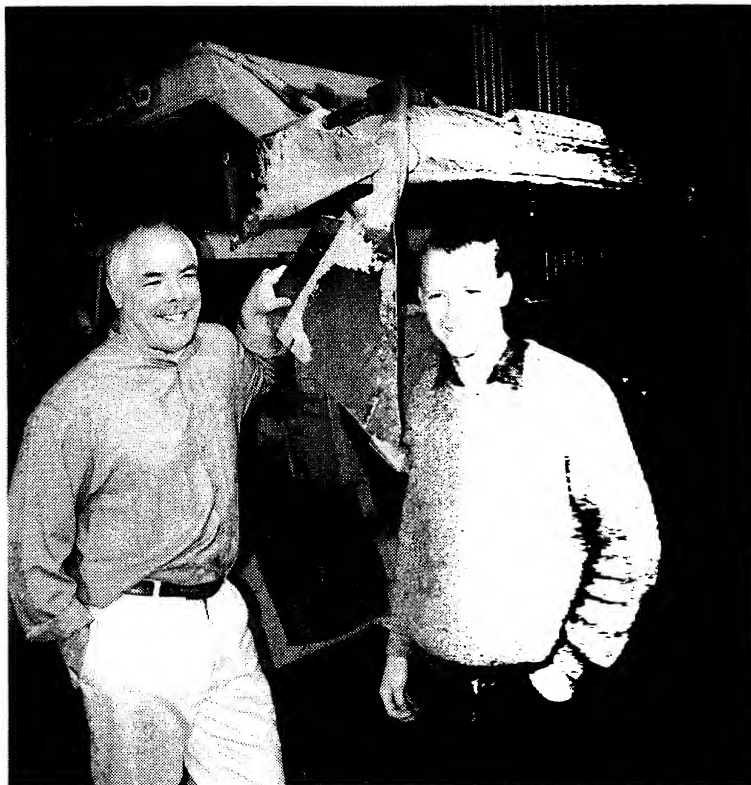
Their breakthrough came in 1994, when they were asked to build a barn for a couple who were interested in building with poured earth, but wanted to see the builders in action and the finished product first. The response to the barn was overwhelming, and Steve and Jeff were offered the job of building the house using recycled beams and railway sleepers, and poured earth walls. When it was finished the owners raved about it, saying they loved it so much they could kiss the walls. Earth Construction Services came into being. Since then Steve and Jeff have developed their service to offer a complete design and construction package, where the home is designed to the clients' requirements, plans are drawn, council approval obtained, and the home built to any stage the client requires.

As well, Earth Construction Services will erect firebreak walls, garden walls, and outdoor features. Walls can be 2.7 metres high and about 30 metres of wall can be poured in a day on preformed concrete footings of about 300 metres.

### THE MIX

The basis of the mix is usually granitic sand. Steve says the most suitable material is anything that makes a good road base with some particles up to 200 millimetres. This means there is a minimum of clay, which can cause shrinkage and cracking in the wall. Road base is readily available and cheap, which avoids digging up the owner's property at great expense, only to find the material there is unsuitable and leaving a hole to be filled on completion.

Cement is incorporated at 6-12 per cent, and test blocks are made and labo-



Steve Taylor and Jeff Love at the working end of the ever-ready Bobcat loader. This machine they describe as an 'extension to the arm' is used to mix and pour the wall material in one operation.

ratory tested to make sure the mix is at the correct strength to meet council standards.

A bobcat is used to dry-mix the cement and soil, water is added and the bobcat used to pour the mix into the top of the wall forms. The mix usually dries overnight allowing the forms to be moved and reset for the next pour.

### ADVANTAGES

Poured earth is a very effective method of building if you have access to forms, or can make them yourself. There is very little handling of the building material and the walls are load bearing, so the structure is strong enough to support the roof or another storey. There is a definite saving of labour which is important in any building method, whether is it owner built or contracted. The handling of the building material is minimised and all performed by machines. The result easily exceeds building or engineering standards, and results in a home which is energy efficient, cosy and attractive. The multiple handling involved in making mud bricks is avoided and the labour of other earth building methods is eliminated. Greenhouse issues are also addressed. Timber does not have to be used in the walls to support the roof, so trees

are saved. Also, all the issues of handling and energy use involved in the manufacture of commercial bricks are eliminated, especially the oven firing which uses large amounts of energy.

Because of the strength of poured earth, council approvals have never been a problem and building inspectors have expressed keen interest in seeing the construction method in action.

The practical benefits, as well as the aesthetic appeal of an earth home have impressed prospective home owners and owner builders alike. This has led to Earth Construction Services receiving enquiries from all over Australia, to a point where they are now looking for other builders to help them with the work. A recent home built in the suburbs has also brought a new direction to the business. Let's hope that a simple technique like poured earth will catalyse the construction of more greenhouse friendly, low impact homes, in the city as well as the countryside, bringing a more natural appeal to our built environment by looking as if they are a part of the earth from which they are made.

More information on poured earth can be obtained from Earth Construction Services: Steve Taylor, 014-925-720, or Jeff Love, 0411-563-461.



# DEXTER CATTLE

## Beefy Little Milkers

by Ray Bowell, Lara, Vic.

Readers might remember from GR 79 (June 1990) the article on Dexter Cattle by Elizabeth Williams, describing the first importation of Dexters to Australia in recent times. Liz described the breed and their origins, and mentioned the first breeding up programme and the, no-longer-allowed, semen imports from the UK. Today Dexters have a national herd of over four thousand in Australia and the demand for them continues to grow. Ray Bolwell of the Lazy R Dexter Stud in south-east Queensland writes now for *Grass Roots* and enquires: 'Is there a Dexter in your future?'

Even if you have a small farm you can still have a little cow with a big heart. Dexters are a small unique breed with near perfect specifications for the small farmer or cottager. They were always kept by small holders in earlier days. And with good reason.

Their size makes handling easy, big fences unnecessary and feeding inexpensive. A Dexter will keep an acre or two grazed for a lot less than a ride-on mower costs to buy, maintain and fuel. And they start every time!

No breed survives unless it's useful. Dexter origins date back to the Bronze Age, with history tracing them to the 17th century in Ireland. There's no doubting their use or their appeal. During the 'bigger is better' fad they became rare, but now are back in favour, and in numbers, in the UK, Europe, America, South Africa, Canada, and increasingly in Australia.

The swing back to Dexters is the result of a swing back to quality and not just size, and a reaction to the recent pursuit of bigger blander beasts that resulted in meat that tasted much like the polystyrene it was packed in. Now the pursuit is for marbling, tenderness and flavour! Dexters meet those criteria.

Dexters had been in Australia since the 1890s, but died out in the war years as did many other breeds. The Dexter revival began in Australia about 15 years ago with the importation of semen via New Zealand, followed by a few animals from the UK in 1988. It started slowly at first with just a few enthusiasts, and grew steadily.

Doc Burke (still breeding Dexters) gave them a big television boost and now there are over 4000 in Australia. The herd would ideally be a minimum of 25,000 so there is still much room to grow. When we have a sizeable national

herd, we can expect boutique butchers to sell the high quality cuts at premium prices to gourmet-style restaurants and customers. Increasing deregulation of the dairy industry will allow for specialist cheese makers and rich cream from Dexter milk to find outlets in that niche market.

Those of us lucky enough to taste the meat and milk know the unique high quality of both these Dexter products. Dexter beef has no problem in reaching the new three, four and five star standards set by the Federal Government with the Meat Standards Authority. Any meat eater sampling Dexter will tell you that emphatically. There are very few true dual-purpose cattle and Dexters are the only small sized breed that produces meat and milk.



The breed is an extremely efficient converter of grass and fodder to meat and milk. Their size dictates that the cuts from the butcher are small and sweet while their milk is protein and butterfat rich. Their twofold use as a house cow makes them a sensible commercial choice too, and their tractable



Dexters have many practical benefits and their placid nature makes for easy handling.

pleasant nature makes them a friendly farm companion!

Dexter cattle are environmentally friendly as they don't compact or de-grade the soil and damage the ground as larger cattle do. Obviously, they enrich it too with their output of manure and nitrogen.

The little cows eat fruit and vegetable scraps readily (one of my bulls is ardent about bananas) and grow happily on almost any pasture without problems.

You can of course breed them for sale as well as use them for your own reasons on your land. There is always a market for your calves – pure bred or crosses. Studs ask and get good prices just as all breeders of stud cattle do. You can, however, start a breeding up programme economically and maybe aim to be a functional stud one day in the future. Alternatively, you can just keep them for milk, meat of high quality and the sheer pleasure of their company.

So, just as it should be, the choice is yours. A few cuddly little cows to lawn-mow and love, a fine herd of stud animals to sell and show, or a commercial breeding programme. Maybe you'll wind up like us with a mixture of all three and a fascinating involvement with

your Dexters.

Whatever way you choose, you will have a lot of fun with your Dexter choices. They are curious, friendly, easily managed and always repay your affection and care. Not too many other breeds of cattle can claim that! The Australasian Dexter Association will be happy to send you information. Write to them at: C/- ABRI, University of New England, Armidale, NSW 2351, or phone: 02-6773-3471, fax: 02-6772-5376. Other Dexter breeders will welcome you and Dexter Studs will be happy to show you their animals and to share their love of the unique little cows with the big hearts.

Dexters would like to be a part of your future!

The Australasian Dexter Association welcomes readers to contact a local Dexter breeder within their region through the Australasian Dexter Association Promotion Groups. The Promotion Groups are formed by members across Australia to promote the breed and assist members in their breeding and farming pursuits.



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### ACT/Monaro

John Thompson (02) 6288 2791

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#### Sydney Area

Bev Gardiner (02) 4573 2528

#### Manning Valley

John Lauder (02) 6556 9057

#### Hunter Valley

Debbie Tinlin (02) 4994 9110

#### Northern Inland Region

Marion McLean (02) 6792 2695

#### North Coast

Diane Fitton (02) 6655 6524

### QUEENSLAND

#### South Coast

Barbara Fulham (07) 5533 8166

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# TRAVELLING JUST DO IT!

by Roger Oliver, Gidgegannup, WA.

Many GR people experience the 'travel bug' and requests are often made via the Feedback pages for advice. I have been travelling recently and offer these suggestions.

## TYPE OF VEHICLE

Two-wheel drive versus four-wheel drive. Four-wheel drives are very nice but are expensive to buy and maintain. To replace a tyre may be double the cost of that for a two-wheel drive. My experience of living in the north of Western Australia both with and without four-wheel drives is that it is usually ground clearance which is most important. Four-wheel drives come into their own in boggy conditions, but then local shires usually close wet roads and to drive on a closed road and be caught can be expensive. In WA it's \$1000 an axle. Pity the poor couple in their Landcruiser who tried to make a run for it with their twin-axle caravan, and got caught. If the going is so rough that you cannot drive in a two-wheel drive, get out and walk with a backpack.

## HELPFUL HINTS

I have a tray-top utility with a home-made canopy. It looks odd, but then so am I. And it saves \$1000 or more and always attracts attention. The sides are made from Mini Orb corrugated roof and wall sheeting on frames made from 75 mm hardwood flooring. I've been asked many times whether the sides roll up - they don't.

Build inside storage shelves and overhead lockers for clothes, otherwise everything from underpants to tinned tomatoes will be rolling around the floor.

Have two spare wheels, spare radiator hoses, shovel, tools to change a broken fan belt, replace light bulbs. A good trolley jack will save many curses out on a dusty road in the middle of nowhere.

For the hot water and a water supply, the ute has a ring main of 100 mm PVC downpipe on the roof, together with a T-piece and screw-top cap to pour the water in. A standard 20 mm outlet is affixed on the underside together with a standard valve.

The whole system is painted matt black. Auto lacquer is more durable than standard house paint. This will get quite hot on a sunny day. For added pressure a twelve volt DC pump can be used.

There are two 80 watt solar panels on the roof, which run a 12 volt fridge. Two 6 volt 200 amp-hour deep cycle batteries are installed in the back with a 10 amp regulator, fuses, amp meter board.

For lighting I use a hybrid fluoro together with a dedicated inverter. A 12 volt radio/cassette player and a supply of tapes have been built into one side panel.

The problem with gas lamps is the mantles are very fragile and it becomes expensive after a few months of travelling.

Travelling for a long time can be quite expensive with a gas fridge, especially when you are camped at one spot for a week or two at a time. LPG gas in

standard nine-kilogram gas bottles can be around two dollars a kilogram in remote areas, and with a gas consumption in hot climates of about a kilogram a day, then it becomes expensive.

Instead of a gas stove I use an unleaded fuel pressure stove. The initial cost is a bit higher but against this is that there is no gas bottle to buy, and secondly unleaded fuel is a lot cheaper and more easily obtainable than LPG gas.

For an oven an insulated double panelled cover including lid was constructed from 16 gauge (1.5 mm) aluminium. The stove manufacturers do not recommend modifying the stove, but if you are sensible then there won't be a problem. NB Use rockwool for insulation. Don't use fibreglass batts. Include an oven thermometer to make sure it doesn't get too hot. With it everything from homemade bread to lemon meringue pie can be made.

To finish, there is a tarp affixed to the side of the utility including a couple of adjustable tent poles and stays. A fold-up card table and two deck chairs are included.

Before you set off to go right around Australia, spend a week camping in the bush near home. It won't take long to realise what's missing and what's superfluous. Include a first-aid kit. Better still take a St John's course before setting off.

And if you're worried about leaving your job, and all that, just do it. After a near-death experience from a snake bite my outlook on life changed a little.



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# NATIONAL TREE DAY!



from Planet Ark.

To mark National Tree Day on September 5th, Planet Ark is calling on every car owner to green up Australia by planting seven trees over the next twelve months. Every year, each car puts 4.3 tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere which is contributing to global warming. Planting seven trees that are native to your local area, will combat global warming and will also contribute to the betterment of your local habitat and wildlife.

Planet Ark's National Tree Day is very easy to get involved in. All people have to do is go to a gardening centre or nursery in order to buy a tree seedling or shrub that is native to their local area. People can then plant these seedlings in their gardens, backyard, schools or company grounds in the two weeks after National Tree Day on September 5th.

To help the survival of trees being planted on the day, it is recommended that people protect their seedlings from weather and pests by planting them in a used milk carton. Over time, the carton will degrade as the seedling grows.

## TREE FACTS

- Trees first appeared on earth long before the dinosaurs did, about 400 million years ago.
- Trees are the largest of all living things, some species can grow 100 metres tall and weigh 600 tonnes.
- Trees combat the greenhouse effect and slow the effects of global warming. They soak up carbon dioxide and exhale oxygen for us to breathe.
- Trees help prevent soil erosion and landslides.
- If car owners plant seven trees every year it will counter the greenhouse emissions of their cars.
- Trees attract native plants, flowers and wildlife to an area by providing both food and shelter.
- Trees improve water quality by acting as a filter to unwanted nutrients and pesticides.
- Trees can prevent soil salinisation and provide soil enrichment by converting nitrogen into nitrates.
- Trees have many commercial uses that include timber building materials,

paper products, furniture, medicines and fuel.

- Trees produce a great range of edible fruit and nuts.
- Trees provide shelter as windbreaks, thus increasing agricultural productivity and can also provide shade for homes, keeping them cool in summer.
- Tree seedlings should be planted in used milk cartons to protect them from weather and pests.
- Many trees can outlive humans, and some can live more than 1000 years.
- The Wollemi Pine, which is only found in Wollemi National Park near Sydney, has a heritage of over 100 millions years. There are only 40 trees in the wild and they have the lowest known genetic variability of any plant species.
- Eucalyptus trees are Australia's most common tree species and can grow up to 50 metres. California, South America and India have all cultivated eucalyptus trees for paper, insect repellents, chest rubs and cough drops.

For more information contact Natalie Berger or Judy Chapman on 02-9319-5288.

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# BUYING A FARM

## DECIDING WHAT TO FARM

by Pat Coleby, Maldon, Vic.

This is the exciting, but also the hard part. If the farm is solely to keep your head above water then the options are not so numerous. I have always maintained that I learned so much about feeding and looking after animals and land because I had to do it on a very short shoe-string!

Do not consider under any circumstances being an absentee farmer. It may work in theory, but it is a highly unsatisfactory method of land ownership. That does not mean being completely anchored to the land; short holidays and trips are not out of the question, although often the desire for them becomes less as one becomes heavily involved in the farm. Which brings me back to what I have already said about everyone having the same commitment!

The other consideration is how many people are going to live on the new farm, and what their relationship to it will be. Humans have tried many times to live in communes, if the rules are draconian and the leadership good they occasionally work, but that kind of enterprise has a very poor running record, often in spite of the best intentions of all concerned.

Except in very rare instances, good physical health is really necessary on a farm; the work actually ensures that you will stay healthy. I cannot remember who the health professional of the past was, but he said all people should do a bit of load-bearing work daily – in other words get a sweat up! Farming is great for that, whatever age you are. I worked with a wonderful woman in the Land Army who at age 11, as an overworked child of the slums, had curvature of the spine so badly she could not stand upright. She determined that farm work and food was what she needed, not the institution that was recommended. She still had a slightly bowed back when we worked together, but she was as strong as whip!

It would be invidious to put an age limit on setting out on a new enterprise, because people's biological ages very rarely match their ages in years. I was



A sign at the gate, or even a roadside stall, will bring in passing customers and help make your chosen enterprise a profitable one.

asked if a goat display would be a good idea at a seminar/show for retirees and remarked that I felt it would not. To farm goats (milking in my case) often needs the abilities of an all-in wrestler and sound knowledge of carpentry, which retirees may not have. In earlier articles I mentioned TAFE courses. There are classes on every conceivable subject and the ability to use tools is paramount. Getting tradesmen in for every job is too costly.

One does not necessarily have to farm animals. Two of my clients are farming their land. They are reclaiming the degenerated soils and re-creating the biodiversity that it must have had in its original state, using the best of the old and best of the modern technology to do it. They hope to attract native flora and fauna by so doing, and already the birds are passing the message around. They are far enough from the big towns not to worry about being invaded by too many come-overs – starlings, sparrows and blackbirds. This kind of farm is strictly a farm to live and retire on and enjoy, which they are doing. We have analysed the soil and so taken the first steps to get

it back to its original state. People find it hard to understand just what has happened to soils since white settlement, and it has to be undone as far as possible.

Others have herb farms or dreams of specialising in garlic, arnica, or whatever, choices which can be carried out very efficiently on small acreage. In fact, the quality of the land needs to be adjusted as above and the enterprise can be nearly as productive as similar set-ups in the northern hemisphere, provided an area with a reasonable rainfall is chosen. I have an ex-Swiss friend who has a mountain farm here and grows arnica. She had been told that it would never grow satisfactorily, but has proved all the pundits wrong. Full remineralisation has meant that the pitfalls she was warned about just have not happened. She also has some specialty beef cattle and it is a delightful small farm earning its keep as well as giving pleasure, and enough work to keep everyone fit.

If, like me, you are set on farming animals of some kind, all the steps being taken by the above farmers would still be necessary, even more so because the health of the stock, whatever kind, will

depend on it. The acreage will be the governing factor. Do not do what a friend did many years ago in Tasmania. She had a land-based Noah's Ark, two of everything, camels included, on what virtually amounted to a postage stamp! The result was total disaster.

Give animals room to move, they will not be happy mentally or physically unless you do. Twenty emus on quarter of a hectare is not on (I have seen it)! The choice of two or four-legged companions/meal tickets is bewildering and hopefully you will have some ideas in place. Birds: geese, ducks, chooks, ostriches or emus; fish and crustaceans need plenty of natural water; cattle: milking or beef; llamoids: alpacas or llamas; deer; sheep: wool, meat or milking; goats: fibre, meat or milking; horses: all sizes, breeding, riding, driving or competing. Any or all of these can be rewarding companions as well as money making hobbies or enterprises.

If you keep stock, this will also mean, where possible, growing their fodder, usually hay or pasture, but occasionally some mixed grain. This comes into the category mentioned for the herb growers. One can, by farming really well, remineralising and feeding the land, grow 200 bales of good hay to the

hectare and that is the staple feed of most of the four and two-legged entities mentioned above.

There is huge satisfaction and pleasure to be gained from interaction with one's chosen animals. This does not mean spoiling them rotten, one has to be fair and firm because it is not pleasurable to be pushed around by any animal. I like Megg Miller's description in GR 127 of the errant chooks rushing back to their proper places when they saw her coming – quite so! When I handled 30 milkers (goats) they all fed in pens of three, so I could see they were well and eating up properly. All had their own pens, worked out to ensure there would be no bullying, and all were with their own age groups. I used to stand at the end of the feed complex and I only had to mention the name of someone who had dived into the wrong stall in the hope of snaffling extra food and she would shoot back to her own pen, so I could shut the gates until they finished.

Go around to studs and complexes that are running the type of animals you have in mind, although more than likely you will have done this years ago and are, like some of my friends, already looking after a llama in the garden shed!



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# GROWING GINSENG

by Yvonne Werner, Omeo, Vic.

Ginseng is a deciduous perennial native to the Northern Hemisphere that is prized for its medicinal and economic qualities. Korean, or Oriental Ginseng (*Panax ginseng*) and the American variety (*Panax quinquefolium*) have long histories as medicinal herbs of great value. Both have been cultivated and traded in world markets for centuries and both have established their long-term viability as agricultural crops for today's medicinal markets. Because of their immense popularity and price, most varieties of ginseng have almost become extinct in their wild form.

Why would I want to grow it? Ginseng is an ideal alternative or additional crop for a small grower, or can easily be grown for personal use. Its medicinal uses in treatments for anaemia, rheumatism, fatigue, high blood pressure, or as a general tonic are well known to those who practice Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). It is becoming more recognised in the West as the processes of scientific investigation confirm what is already known in the East!

## GROWING NEEDS

So how does one go about becoming a ginseng grower? Like all crops, there are basic requirements that must be fulfilled before you can consider ginseng growing in your area. These are:

- Minimum of 75 percent shade provided either by trees or with an alternative such as shadecloth or wood lathe.
- Mildly acidic soil between 4.5 and 7.0 pH with 5.5 to 6.5 being the optimum. A good amount of organic matter is also preferred.
- Positive drainage. Ginseng does not like wet, boggy soil and most soil types from clay loam to sandy loam are fine as long as they do not hold water.
- South to south-east facing slopes to minimise exposure to the sun.
- Distinct four-season climate with a cold winter. Ginseng needs about 100 days with a ground temperature below 10°C to promote spring growth.

## SET-UP COST

What does it cost to set up? This is a bit



On the left are two-year rootlets, five to a pot, ready to transplant.  
Right are three year old rootlets ready for the garden.

of a 'depends' question. Ginseng has some distinct advantages over many crops in that there is diversity in growing methods. Each method has its inherent costs (seed and/or rootlets, mulch, shadecloth or substitute). Methods range from wild-simulated, where one basically places seeds in the bush and forgets them for seven years, to fully cultivated and managed beds. In line with popular opinion, size is not important either. One-tenth of an acre is about the minimum that you need to plant to commence commercial farming. As an idea, 1.5 lb (0.68 kg) of American ginseng seed can cost between \$300 and \$600, depending on the price ex the USA, which is where most seed comes from at the moment. There are approximately 8000 seeds to the pound which if planted optimally (as below) would nicely occupy your tenth of an acre. Of course you can buy small amounts if you are planting for personal use.

## PLANTING

How do I plant it? If you choose to plant into beds, prepare them as you

would for a vegetable garden. That is, slightly raised to promote drainage and as wide and as long as you can manage. Seeds should be spaced about 10 - 15 cm apart with 15 cm between rows. This is to ensure good ventilation as they grow and avoid any fungal problems due to humidity. Plant when the soil is moist and mulch (organically) to a depth of about 10 - 15 cm with loose straw or other light mulch. Tease out closely packed wads of straw to ensure the mulch over the seed is open textured.

Seeds should sprout in spring, the first year plant has three leaves on a central stem. Each year after dormancy another 'branch' will appear with five leaves. This pattern repeats until the plant is mature. Ginseng is a very slow maturing plant, it is definitely not of the 'plant this year - harvest next' variety. It takes seven years for a ginseng plant grown under natural conditions to be considered mature. For this reason, one plants seeds every year, anticipating the first harvest about eight years after the first sown seeds have sprouted.

## HARVEST & USE

Then what? Ginseng is harvested by digging up the mature root. Immature roots can be dug during dormancy if you need to shift them. They will not suffer if they are planted back fairly soon. Once a mature root is dug, it is washed carefully and can be dried, although the fresh root market is expanding. Membership of the Australian Ginseng Growers Association will ensure a market for your crop.

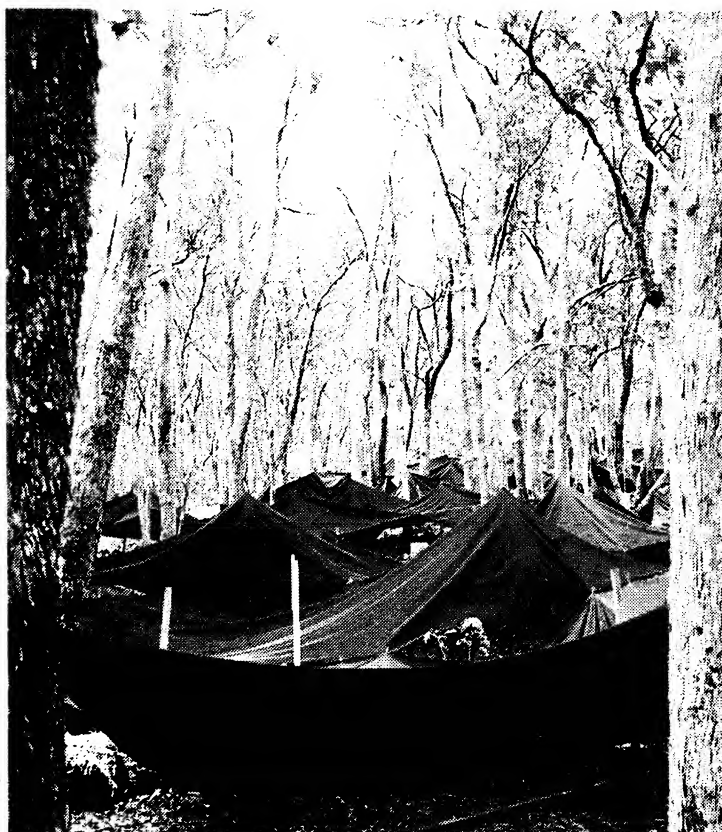
Personal users can preserve in alcohol (I have a 10 year old plant in a jar of cognac, I'll let you know what it tastes like!), or slice into salads, or soak into tea. If you have a particular condition you are trying to remedy, consulting a TCM practitioner or naturopath will ensure the best medicinal use of your ginseng plants.

Given the right conditions, ginseng is a valuable plant to grow from both a personal and financial perspective. Even if you choose not to grow ginseng commercially, you can always benefit from homegrown roots. Good health is good life, and ginseng can promote both.

If you would like more information, contact the Australian Ginseng Growers Association on 03-5968-1877.



Third year plant with the tiniest of flower heads. Note the loose mesh of straw and leaves.



Shadecloth protects ginseng seedlings within an area of natural bush.



Ginseng grower Yvonne Werner relaxes with a mug of ginseng tea.

# IT'S THE JOURNEY THAT'S IMPORTANT

by Susan Lendon, Morwell, Vic.

We've come a long way since the article I wrote on 'Renovations or Revelations' and real 'Grassy Roots Hot Water'. *Grass Roots* became my friend in Bairnsdale (Fairy Web Shawl), moved with three children and me to Morwell (Paint Smocks and Scary Spiders), and wasn't far away when we lived in Yallourn (Weaving on Bicycle Spokes). Now that was self-sufficiency: home-made bread, vegies, fruit, and chickens under a pizza plate brooder in the bedroom. The town was dug up to provide more coal so I moved to Yallourn North and Peter came into my life (*The Fireside Book*). Lots more chickens and sheep and Peter's three children to love. They weren't under our roof, but always in our hearts and full on at holiday time. We had sheep in the backyard and more chooks than the permit allowed, so, eggs for all. Donkeys and horses were added to the menagerie. All the paraphernalia that goes with boys who love cars, fishing, sports and camping filled the shed and some of it is still there.

Our family has grown and settled all over the country. Grandchildren are arriving to love and be loved by. The old dog was new at the same time as the GR hot water service and both are still going strong. The house hasn't changed much with renovations ongoing but, heck, there's only the two of us here most of the time now and we'll get around to it. Writing this has stirred us into action again and we moved our bed into the box room. We can now live cosily in half the house while we repair and reline the tough walls in the rest.

Children are in constant contact while living busy lives of their own. Our daughter who did not want to learn to sew now makes and exhibits beautifully hand-crafted cloth dolls; another daughter is at university. Our children's careers span tree lopping, wood turning, retail sales, building and farming. We are looking forward to the births of two precious new babies in the family this year. My work sees me behind an administration desk, not my ideal, but part of the journey.



Susan mixing the Christmas pud with grandchild Zoey.

Book lovers both, we have realised a dream, to be surrounded by volumes that smell of old leather and past lives; books that mould into your hand and allow you to share the thoughts and feelings of others. Peter opened a bookshop and continues the book binding traditions he learned as an apprentice thirty-five years ago. The shop comes with a yard and the best bit – The Chooks. We've come full circle to again share our lives with 'The Girls', Mary, Martha, Marilyn, Adele and the Bishop (she's the white one with the regal air who leads the flock). The hen house is labelled Bishop's Court – naturally. Quiet time sees Peter nicking out the back to feed The Girls special

mash he cooks up every day or tidbits he has saved, or the lunch he did not have time to eat. Most days I receive presents of eggs or shop-grown vegies and fruit.

The car is still the one we had way back, we have half a bed each (give or take a cat or two), we eat well and are fit and healthy and the roof doesn't leak (not often anyway).

What does *Grass Roots* mean to us? GR kept my feet on the ground in the difficult early days, kept the basics in focus, and when I lose the plot occasionally I'm uplifted by the friendship, good practical advice and caring ways of other readers. GR lives by the bed, not bound into volumes yet (I'm working on it ),





Zoey collecting the eggs in her best (odd) high heeled shoes.

and is dipped into frequently. Number 4 was my first intro to the magazine and I too thought the bloke in the first issue was David, sorry David.

Life does get in the way of dreams and doesn't always follow the path I'd like it to, but the dreams continue. It's the journey that's important, not always the arriving. I have someone to love and always something to do, be it work or pleasure and then there are The Chooks – bliss!

# ROSELLA JAM

by Paul Melling, Bayldon, NSW.

**Don't be alarmed – this is not a rosella parrot concoction. Rosellas are a dark red fruit produced by the rosella shrub *Hibiscus sabdariffa*.**

I have an old recipe for rosella jam, which came from a friend's grandmother. I pick the fruit when it is a deep, but bright, red colour. To prepare the fruit I have an aluminium pipe about 300 mm long and approx 10 mm diameter. I have sharpened one end as shown in the diagram below.

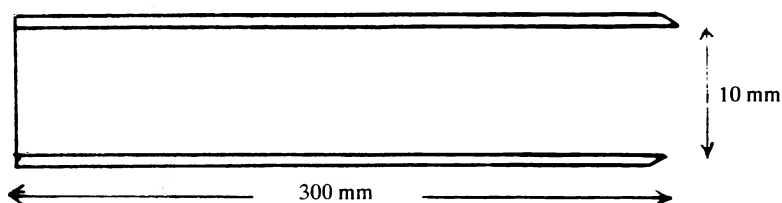
Don't prepare the fruit by washing it. Remove grubs of course, but otherwise leave it. Gently hold the fruit and push the rod through from the base taking the seed out. Throw away the seeds, there is enough pectin in the husks. You will need to adapt the ratio, but for every kilo of husks allow two kilos of sugar and one litre of water. Put the husks and the water in a big pan over high heat. After about 10 minutes the husks will have reduced a lot. Once the husks have reduced and are soft, slowly add the sugar. I use raw sugar as it tastes better. Stir it a lot until the grittiness has gone. Turn down the heat until the mixture is 'roll



boiling', that is, the mixture rolls in from the outside of the pan to the middle. Leave it to do this for about twenty minutes and at the same time skim off the scum and other bits. Take a tablespoonful and put it onto a saucer and then into the freezer. Once it settles, turn the saucer on its side to see if the jam is thickening. If not, boil a bit longer. If it is okay, take it off the heat and put it into the sterilised jars straight away. It will take a few hours to cool and thicken.

My brother-in-law found out I had made some rosella jam and he was into it. He gave me the ultimate compliment by saying, 'this is as good as Mum's'.

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# GARDENING IN A PENSIONER UNIT

by Jean Mengel, Southport, Qld.

Few life experiences are more soothing than falling rain on a galvanised iron roof when you are safe and snug in bed. The Gold Coast has had its share of showers lately and as I look out at the nature strip behind my small unit, all is green and still – serene in early morning light. My baskets of ferns and balsams suspended from the roof are just beginning to move gently in the first light breeze of the day.

I was born in Spring Hill, Brisbane. In the seventies, after my family had grown, I came down to the coast for a holiday. Well, it's lasted a long time as I'm still here. I liked the fresh air near the sea, also the casual lifestyle. The area was the haven of new settlers, but occasionally it was possible to actually meet a Queenslander.

Some years ago I applied for public housing, and, after a waiting period of about three years, I was allocated a unit in a village about a kilometre and a half from the sea behind Southport. The pretty, new red brick cottages were laid out in a horse shoe shape around landscaped grounds. I moved in with my bits and pieces, made my new home as attractive as possible, put up the pictures of my grandchildren, then turned my attention towards making a garden as every unit had its own fenced-off plot.

I must have been a thwarted farmer in some previous life as I have never been able to resist the impulse to make things grow. I soon discovered I had a few difficulties to overcome. The soil at the rear around the patio had been compacted with heavy machinery and was as hard as a rock with no topsoil whatever. Over the back fence was a stand of high timber on the north-east side which only allowed filtered light into that area. The big plus was that I had a lovely view of natural parkland edged on the far side by a small tidal creek which attracted all manner of bird life.

A friend and I placed shadecloth along the wire fence to protect against sea breezes which at times developed into winds. I planted three tree ferns along there and in two years, only one grew so I took the other two out and



placed them in large terracotta pots where they live happily today. Four years down the track, that area is planted with shade lovers such as tree ferns, coleus, bird-nests, clivia, diffenbachia and multicoloured balsams and hanging baskets, all visible from the windows.

On the southern side I was faced with another problem. This area, approximately 7.6 by 4.5 metres, was on an awkward slope and had to be negotiated with care. A local authority built a concrete path from the side gate to the back patio. The following Christmas my daughter and son-in-law, Ros and Kel, gave me an unusual present. They built gardens on either side of the path, edged it with wooden coppers filled with good soil. I could then garden on the slope and, although in the beginning I did not think I could grow vegies there because of lack of sunlight, in time I discovered I could successfully grow tomatoes, lettuce, climbing beans and a variety of herbs together with mixed flowers.

As with many gardens, there has been much trial and error in my experiences. I have been an avid reader of *Grass Roots* for many years, also watch Gardening Australia on TV and have gleaned a few practical hints along the way.

As I owned no vehicle and had no relies in the area, if I wanted garden materials I had them delivered from the supermarket with my groceries: potting mix, lime, blood and bone, liquid fertilisers, were all sent to the door. We have all seen plants in shops showing adverse effects of lack of water and air conditioning. I often bought these plants, much reduced in price, and immediately gave them a lot of TLC, and in all instances but one they grew quite well.

When planting new cuttings, I often position them in two different places around the garden, they will go ahead

faster in one position than the other. Egg shells, fine vegie scraps and grass slashings from the nature strip behind were mixed with blood and bone and used on the garden. I was very careful about what scraps I used as I did not want to encourage vermin. Soluble fertiliser every now and then pushed things along.

I planned to have a different shrub or climber out for show at different months of the year. In my little area at front I have a snowtop which looks a beautiful spread of white for most of the winter. At my kitchen window I have a lavender which comes into drifts of white in July. Plumbago is in flower there in December, with three different colours of bougainvillea, so there is some flowering shrub in bloom quite often. All must be pruned back severely as the small area dictates, but to date this has made no difference to their performance.

I bought a metal arch which was advertised on special and placed it over my side gate. A white potato vine and Chinese jasmine are on their way up.

When I lived in another area many years ago an old Italian gardener came to prune my grape vines. He was a dignified old gentleman who took his time. I clearly remember he tapped the heel of his shoe on the ground, looked very seriously at me and said, 'Remember madam, all we have comes from the earth'. Think about it.

I do believe gardening is therapeutic and provides some form of exercise, especially for the oldies. So to the many new and old gardeners reading *Grass Roots*, I say get out there into the sunshine and good luck.

## MY GARDEN

*Is change with seasons of the year,  
Is hope for all that I hold dear,  
Is evidence of love's labour past,  
Is beauty faith and peace until the last.*

## CORN COB TEA

Prepare a tea from corn cob silk for kidney problems, cystitis, prostate problems and bed wetting. Remove the brown ends which give the tea a bitter taste.

The silk can be dried for winter use.

# WILL THE FLESH HOLD OUT?

by Mike Williams, Laanecoorie, Vic.

In answer to Megg's request to Grassrooters for their story, here is mine.

We have lived at Laanecoorie for 10 years now. The search to find and achieve my dream has taken two marriages, many address changes all along the eastern coast of Australia and 34 years of frustration. And today, as I sit at the computer and wonder if it was worth it, I have to answer with a definite yes. The freedom to do your own thing, whether or not your friends and relatives agree with you, is the core to the creativity which is in all of us. To stop following your dream, to give up, to quit before it has been achieved, is to put yourself on the lowest ranks of society.

When my parents arrived in Australia from England with four kids in tow in 1954 they rented a run-down house on 30 acres on the peninsula. I was 16 at the time and those years we lived there were to form the goal that has driven me and formed the dream I have been aspiring to achieve ever since. In the years since 1979 your magazines have been read many times and have spurred me on and solidified the picture I have been carrying.

My wife (my right hand through thick and thin) and I now have 17 acres of box and wattle bushland, of which approximately four acres has been cleared. I have built a two-bedroom timber home with all mod cons, shadehouse as big as the house, a potting house, a garden shed, a storage shed, a 60 x 20 work-

shop, 3 x 45,000 litre concrete tanks. Two large dams provide ample water for almost any crop. We have half an acre under vegies and over twenty fruit and nut trees, chooks, ducks, a pet goat and five dogs, plus a fox I've been trying to shoot for a couple of years and the occasional feral cat.

My dream has come true because I kept at it and was prepared to pay the price, and my advice to all people who hanker for their own slice of this great country is to constantly think about it, to form a picture in your mind of what you are after, and be prepared to pay whatever it takes.

To live on a small property in 1954, compared to that lifestyle today is worlds apart.

There are ever-increasing costs (water was free in '54), increasing floods and droughts (the climate was perfect in '54), and ever-more-stringent laws being enacted by shires (freedom of choice was greater in '54). With a flood of chemicals going into our food, of which the effects are still unknown, there is still a definite advantage to owning your dream and producing your own food.

Some changes of a more positive kind include chainsaws to cut firewood, electric pumps to move water, air conditioners and all mod cons to help preserve and store your produce, machinery to assist you in the paddock, knowledge at your fingertips in the form of this computer, electronics to govern your water-

ing so you can take a holiday. and the list doesn't stop there.

As you have probably worked out by now, I am 60, and I think the time has come for me to alter my lifestyle. I find that the satisfaction of knowing that everything eaten by my family while visiting has been produced by our own efforts, and seeing a good crop of organically grown vegies, is not dimming but changing. I find now that I would rather be sitting here (it's easier), or standing at my lathe turning a nice piece of cypress with the radio in the background (no aching back). Or would I?

I think that this place will be on the market soon so that I can start again. Some of your recent stories are tuning me to the possibility of what I could be doing in a very large backyard where I could still grow my own food and be closer to the conveniences of a larger town, and still play at my hobbies.

The urge to create, the spirit, is still strong; the question is will the flesh hold out?

All at GR produce an excellent magazine and it will be read and reread by me and all my family for years to come, wherever I may be. Thank you.



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# 'DARUKA' SLIPPERS

by Pam Cole, Tuncurry, NSW.

Just now I have a friend in Denmark who keeps me well supplied with slippers knitted to an Icelandic pattern taught her by an elderly neighbour who had lived as a lighthouse keeper's wife in the Faeroes. These are really special; so snug and cosy, and clinging so well that I can slip in and out of the wellies without removing their comfort from my toes; a real bonus to one as lazy and as averse to the slightest chilliness as I! But the making of these is a secret, known only to dear Connie and her friend Mrs Frujhus, and well shielded by the language barrier and half the world's oceans between. No, it's 'Daruka' slippers I began to tell you about today. My mother's slippers, made for toddling grandchildren during snowy winters long ago.

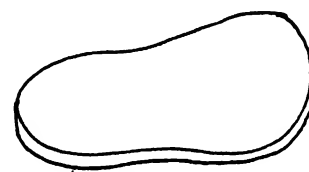
We need to return to the 1960s for the authentic flavour. To a sheep and cattle property high on the tablelands of NSW, a timber house with an oil heater in one room, an open fire in another, and the Aga warming the kitchen; with a snowfall, black frost, needling sleet, or howling gales outside. Take your pick of those, and you have a Yarrowitch winter's day! Then, from the basket of knitting wool leftovers, find enough Totem wool to use doubled, fetch the tortoiseshell knitting needles, and venture out, well rugged-up, to the meathouse in search of that roll of Feltex reclaimed when the newly acquired *real* wall-to-wall carpet was laid! For today's knitters this translates into any 8-ply used double or its chunky equivalent-in-thickness, needles of choice, and some kind of material in place of Feltex, which was densely packed mottled felt floor covering, of about thirteen millimetre thickness.

When the first toddler visited, and the snowflakes blew in gusts of wind against the windowpanes, Mum began to ransack this scrap collection. She muttered and umm-ed and ah-ed. 'Not sure yet,' she said. 'Just something that my Great-aunt . . . mumble, mumble . . . No, it must have been this way . . .' And with frowns, and much unravelling and re-

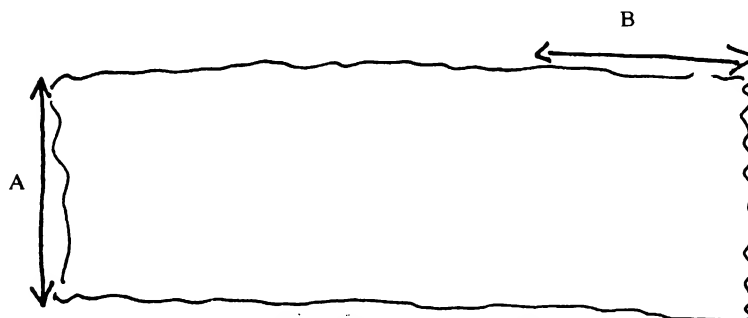
## Making The Slippers



moss-stitch rectangle

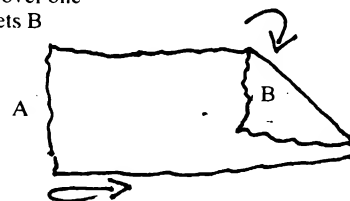
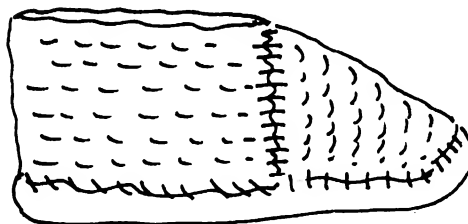


feltex sole



the magic twist – flip over one end so that A meets B

the finished slipper



Well – as you see from the story, even Mum had to think hard about this one!

counting of stitches, much casting-on and casting-off, she finally settled to knitting with doubled wool and small needles a tightly-stitched little rectangle.

It looked like nothing on earth, and being curtly told: 'Slippers, Sshhh!' as she counted more stitches, we were none the wiser. 'Children and fools,' we were told so often in our youth, 'should never see anything half-done'. And so we held our tongues, the dignity of young motherhood very much at stake!

The toddler's foot was borrowed, further muttering and muffled cursing took place, but finally subsided into satisfaction. The tiny clenched stitches continued to cram the needles, to-and-fro, in her busy hands. Still later the squirming

toddler was recaptured and its wriggling foot outlined in pencil on a sheet of paper. Then came some sighs of puzzlement, a tortoiseshell needle speared among her tightly-braided salt-and-pepper hair, as the rectangles twisted this way and that.

'Now what did Grandma Shepherd . . . ? Ah! Got it! Knitted from the hip, they did,' she added in a characteristic non sequitur. 'Your great-grandmother and her sisters . . . little holder on the hip for one needle . . . took the weight . . . never moved, other hand did all the work . . . made of bone I think, and leather. On her belt, y'know. Never travelled without it.'

Soles were cut to the infant's foot pattern, a trifle larger to allow for stitching.



but (anxiously insisted upon) not enough to cause stumbles and tripping. Then the magic twist, at last remembered, was applied. Once firmly stitched together a pair of tough little slippers emerged, to be decked with tightly rolled pompoms, a bow of crocheted chain, cuffs up or down, edged in contrasting crochet stitch, or simply left plain. Every grandchild received these at least once each in their infancy, and numerous little visiting neighbours did as well. It stopped only when the Feltex supply at last ran out.

Great-grandmother, and the Great-great-aunts, ladies whale-boned, bustled and lace-capped, aiming their pince-nez sternly down the corridors of time, must have felt their lips quirking in amused satisfaction to see a rosy toddler in 1960s skivvy and corduroy overalls tumbling in the warmth of an oil-heated room and kicking feet encased in a slipper pattern they'd remembered from their childhood!



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# DATE PALMS

by Gaelle Murray, Pialba, Qld.

The date palm is believed to have originated in Western India. It has been grown for thousands of years and today is grown throughout the tropics.

Palms grow to about 30 metres and unless trimmed their lower trunks will be covered in dead leaves. About 30 new leaves are produced each year on the new shoot extension. They need to be desuckered to stop a dense clump from forming.

The palms have an extensive fibrous root system. They can withstand drought, high salinity levels and flooding for limited periods. Therefore they can be grown over a wide range of conditions. Best production occurs in well drained soils provided with ample water in regions with a dry atmosphere, during fruit development and maturity.

Fruit quality and time of maturity is influenced by the pollen parent as well as the female parent. Bunches of fruit may be protected from rain damage by covering them with paper sleeves tied at the top. Palms in full production may yield up to 10 kilograms of dried dates.

After harvest fruit is fumigated to destroy insects and cured by heating for up to 72 hours at 45 to 50° with high humidity to precipitate tannins and remove the astringency.

The fruit is shaken free from the stems and packed either moist or after further drying prior to storage or distribution. If favourable weather conditions prevail, the fruit will ripen naturally.

Date seedlings are variable, often taking many years to come into cropping.

Female trees can only be identified after flowering begins. Tissue culture techniques, recently developed, will eventually replace the traditional method of propagating by suckers, which at times can be difficult to handle.

The date is a versatile fruit as it can be used fresh or dried and either cooked or uncooked.

These tangy fruit and date chews make a healthy snack for any occasion.

### CHEWY DATE SNACKS

125 g whole blanched almonds  
125 g pecan nuts  
1 cup wholemeal biscuit crumbs  
rind of 1 lemon, finely grated  
125 g currants or sultanas  
125 g pitted dates  
125 g raisins  
125 g dried apricots  
2 tbsp lemon juice  
2 tbsp water  
200 g crushed mixed nuts

Combine almonds and pecans in blender and whizz until finely chopped. Tip into a mixing bowl with biscuit crumbs and lemon rind. A little vegetable oil wiped over the blender blades will help prevent the fruits from sticking when you add currants, dates, raisins and apricots and whizz until they are well chopped. Add liquid and nut/crumb mixture and continue to mix until a thick ball shape results. Extra water can be added if mixture seems too thick. Shape mixture into bite-sized balls and roll in crushed nuts. Store in airtight container in refrigerator.

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# COOKING ON YOUR SLOW COMBUSTION HEATER

by Lorna Freegard, Albany, WA.

With there still being a nip in the air and slow combustion heaters working full time in many homes, it's a good time to experiment with cooking on top of the heater. You will be using 'free' energy and the food, cooked slowly, often in its own juices, will be tender and flavourful. Depending on the type of heater you have, there are few limitations on what can be cooked on top of it, from soups and roasts to puddings.

The cooking utensil I use is a camp oven with a tight-fitting lid. The camp oven has several advantages over conventional aluminium or stainless steel pots. Firstly, it is made of cast iron, which I am told adds small amounts of iron to your diet as it cooks. This is particularly good today, since many people are said to be anaemic. I read an article the other day that said up to seventy percent of the elderly were anaemic to some degree! Teenagers on diets, non-meat eaters, and people who eat few or no greens are also at risk. Secondly, the camp oven is re-usable. I have never heard of a camp oven getting 'worn out'. Thirdly, they are relatively cheap. I purchased a large one, new, for \$30. Garage sales or second-hand shops are obviously cheaper. Fourthly, a well-seasoned camp oven does not stick as stainless steel is prone to do. And finally, there are no plastic fittings on them that are prone to heat damage from cooking on the heater top.

Different heaters will have different tops on them, all of which get hot. In my experience, they all can maintain a rolling boil in a pan of water. If a stove is too hot, put a trivet or cake rack (no plastic or paint) between the heater and the camp oven. This is enough to lower the temperature, having air as a buffer between the two.

## SEASONING THE CAMP OVEN

Season your camp oven to prevent rust forming which can taint your food. To do this, wash your camp oven (same goes for cast iron fry pans too) in hot water with a stainless steel pan scourer to take it back to clean metal. If there is a gremlin in the house who cooks on high

all the time and incinerates baked beans and eggs onto the pan (You may well laugh!), you may need to either soak it or use detergent. Rinse the pan thoroughly and put it immediately on top of your heater to stop rust forming. The rust will form within a few minutes if you don't do this. Now, when the pan is hot pour some oil into it and rub it around all the inside with a piece of kitchen paper. Do not put oil in when the pan is cold, or it will not season. Don't ask me why, it's just the way it is.

On my heater top I can leave the pan for half an hour or so, rubbing the oily paper around a couple more times. Note that the oil is not to burn. The heater you have may be hotter than mine, so watch it. The pan is now seasoned. By the way, do the lid the same way.

## RECIPES

### Roasts

Now for some things to cook. I started with roasts; lamb roasts and rolled roasts both do very well in a camp oven. Some cuts of meat give out a lot of liquid during cooking and, with the lid on the camp oven, this does not evaporate. For this reason, I add little or no extra liquid, but always use a little oil to ensure no sticking. At the start of cooking I put on top of the roast, some whole onions, quartered carrots (lengthwise) and a few whole cloves of garlic. If a roast with bones in it will not fit, bone it out either partly until it fits, or completely. I like to leave in as much bone as possible because it adds greatly to the roast's flavour. When cooked the bones can be easily twisted out since the roast is so tender, which makes carving easier.

The roast will take a minimum of three hours, but can be left on a cooler heater for up to six hours for a real melt-in-the-mouth roast. The thickened pan juices make excellent gravy. About an hour and a half before the roast is ready, put on top of it some chunks of pumpkin, zucchini, potato or marrow. I prefer the potatoes done on the shelf, just inside the fire box; no foil needed since they don't get burnt on the ashes.



### Stews

Stews can obviously be done the same way, so too mince. Don't forget with mince and stews that dumplings can be added half an hour before the stew is served.

### Puddings

One of my finest achievements so far was a suet crust steak and kidney pudding, done in a glazed pudding basin covered with butter papers. The camp oven contains the boiling water into which the pudding basin is placed. Also dessert puddings, steamed apple, sultana, syrup or jam sponges are all out of this world. Use conventional old-fashioned recipes, or even cake mixes if you are lazy or in a hurry.

### Pea and Ham Soup

I make a luscious pea and ham soup on the heater. It is the usual bit of this, bit of that type recipe, as soups usually are. But I don't skimp on the smoked bacon bones. I boil the bones in water for several hours before adding a diced choko, onions, and a mixture of red lentils, yellow split peas, and green peas. Before adding the lentils I put a teaspoon of bicarb in them and pour on boiling water. Leave to soak while the bacon bone is boiling. The addition of the bicarb to the soaking water means that when you put them in the soup they almost instantly fall apart and thicken the soup. This saves hours of boiling and sticking to the

bottom. The two last ingredients, added just before mashing or liquidising, are chopped leek tops and a good shake of curry powder which really livens it up, but does not make it taste of curry. Take out the bones, pull off the meat and return it to the soup after mashing. Burn the bones in the heater, which helps re-heat the soup!

#### Bread & Butter Custard

Use your usual recipe for this, but to prevent it boiling and separating put the dish it is cooked in on a cake rack, to raise it up from direct contact of the hot plate.

#### Baked Apples

Stuff apples with sultanas, cinnamon, butter and honey or syrup. Add a little water and cook with lid on until apples are soft. The steam trapped inside helps.

#### Fruit Dumplings

I open a jar of preserved fruit (peaches, apricots, strawberries, plums etc) and whizz it up, juice and all in the blender. It is already sweetened. I put that in a saucepan or deep fry pan with lid and heat. When it is boiling, drop in dessertspoons of dumpling mix, well spaced out because they grow. Put on the lid and wait. Make sure the fruit pulp is not boiling so rapidly it burns. This is so quick and really delicious.

The quickest way to make dumplings is to mix a big teaspoon of butter into a cup of self-raising flour. Add water or milk to make a dough that is fairly sticky but manageable. I prefer the flavour of suet dumplings.

#### Steamed Fruit Sponge

If you want to be lazy, use a cheap packet cake mix (65 cents), any sort.

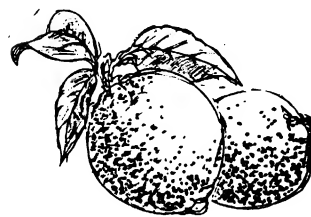
I put either fruit, syrup, chocolate sauce (icing, sugar, cocoa and butter), or jam in the bottom of a pudding basin and put the sponge mix on top. Put two butter papers over the top, remember the sponge will expand so don't fill the basin. Fasten butter papers with elastic bands or string. Lower into a pan of boiling water, put lid on and steam for  $\frac{3}{4}$  - 1 hour. The water should come  $\frac{2}{3}$  -  $\frac{3}{4}$  the way up the basin and never boil dry.

Anyway, there must be so many things I have not thought of yet, but all these recipes I have tried and really enjoyed. I expect chops could be braised, steak could be fried etc, etc. Do be careful until you work out how hot your heater top is, and remember, if it seems to be too hot, put the camp oven on a cast iron trivet or a cake rack that has no plastic, rubber or paint on it.

Best of luck with your free cooking, and I hope these ideas are of interest.

## WEST INDIAN LIME

by Gaelle Murray



The lime probably originated in the northern regions of India and Malaysia and has been cultivated for hundreds of years. It thrives in frost-free regions which are too hot for commercial lemon production as it is more tropical in its requirements than other citrus trees.

It is an evergreen tree that grows to about six metres. Flowers are produced almost continuously. It is an oval-shaped fruit with light green skin when mature. If left on the tree the fruit turns yellow. The skin is thin and the juice very acid. Lime oil extracted from the skin by crushing or distilling is a valuable byproduct.

Unlike other citrus fruits, limes are propagated by seed. They may also be propagated by grafting onto rootstocks of sweet orange or mandarin.

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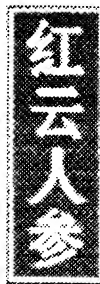


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**"The 'Gift of Heaven' from the High Country"**

# NEW BEGINNINGS

by Dawn Lambie, Hastings, Vic.

**There comes a time in the lives of most people when they find themselves having to set up a home on a tight budget. It might be the first flat when a young person leaves home and branches out into the world for the first time. Or, it might be that a traumatic relationship breakdown results in one or both partners having to begin the homemaking process again. Dawn Lambie faced the latter situation over 15 years ago, and now shares with us how, with a positive attitude and a flair for improvisation, she created a cosy home at a bargain price.**

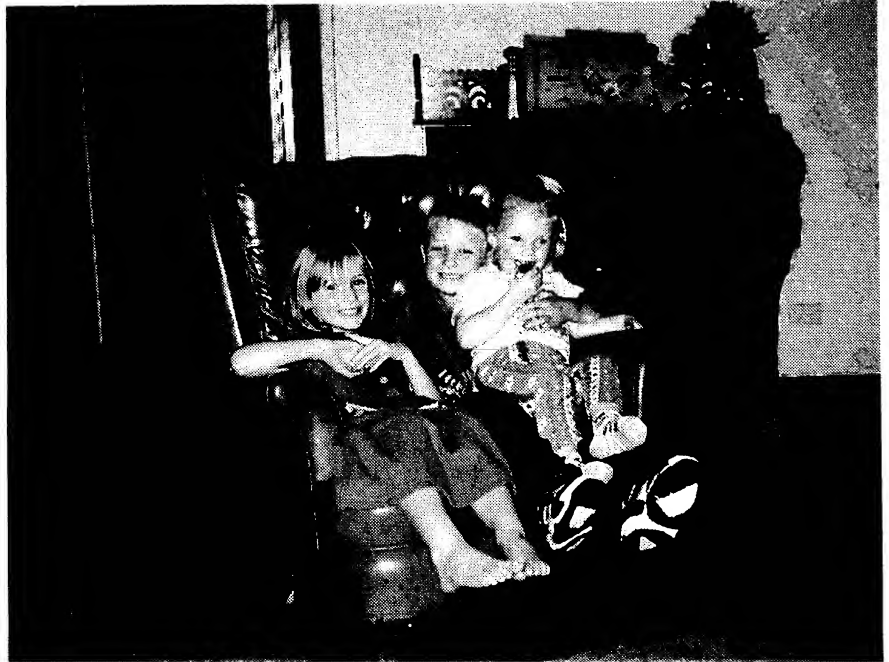
It has been about 15 years now since I found myself in an unenviable position – separated, homeless (that is still hard to admit), living in an old leaky caravan with my daughter, then 12, and my boys living with friends until we found accommodation.

How could this have happened? Well, that is another story – this is how to survive when the worst things happen to you. There are two sides of healing: emotional and practical and I will concentrate on the practical first. I do find that starting over is difficult and probably unfair, but that is how it is. Get over it and do it anyway. How easy to write that now when at the time the problems seemed insurmountable.

We had to move because of domestic violence and we left with a washing machine and TV and not much else. We had been given some good advice by a real estate agent who drove me to the housing commission and put my name down. The waiting list was long, but we received priority because of living in the caravan and found ourselves housed after six weeks. My middle son chose to live with his father and never did come home to me. This was extremely difficult for my daughter as they were only 16 months apart in age and had been close.

We began the long road back to having a lifestyle that would not be a life of luxury certainly, but one of dignity and with a bit of comfort thrown in. There is a quality of life to be had in simple things and last year when I discovered *Grass Roots* and started to read the stories of many people who had overcome much worse than I with grace and humour I felt I had come home. I immediately bought about 50 back copies and must say finding GR was one of the life-changing moments of this woman's life.

Looking at my comfortable home, a two-bedroom unit (still Ministry of



Dawn's granddaughter Kahlia, with friends Zane and Ruby on the \$10 chair purchased at a garage sale. Behind is the 1912 pump organ displaying old sheet music.

Housing) which I moved into two years ago when my nest at last became empty, I can see a pretty mixture (an eclectic mix!) of furniture in the country style, all bought at bargain prices over a long period. It started with a beautiful old 1930s dressing table from St Vinnies delivered to our very empty house (we were sleeping on the floor). The dressing table had dark polished wood and winged mirrors and was in mint condition. Thus began my search to fill my new home with affordable, tasteful and comfortable bits and pieces to make our house a home.

What did we do before garage sales? This typewriter I am now using was \$20, a self-correcting electronic! The lovely old (1912) pump organ was \$50 and my beautiful comfortable three-seater Sanderson print floral couch \$150 (a major purchase from the op shop) – it doubles as a bed for overnights. The

*Trading Post* netted a shadehouse for \$60 delivered and a child's Colonial bedroom suite for the spare room for \$50. My dishwasher was \$100 delivered, works wonderfully and is so silent and a boon for busy times (not really GR stuff though).

I only buy what I love and have found many pleasurable hours doing up potential treasures. I can bargain with the best of them and did so to obtain a standard lamp stand when I had only \$5 left. I got it too.

An old treadle machine, marked down because it is a cabinet style and not the more fashionable one with drawers, is now a hall stand with the front removed and the leaves taken off. An old desk (\$5) proudly displays photos and has a naturally distressed look, with no help from me.

I love the look of old linen and have



picked up some beautiful pieces at market stalls, for example a queen-size doona cover with old-fashioned roses and lace for \$5 and pillow cases with embroidery for \$1 each.

I didn't plan to become a bargain hunter; it was thrust upon me, but I have found a special knack for it and my Scottish ancestors are so proud. I have had many and varied jobs since that 'caravan holiday' and the money was important to supplement the income, but there have been many paydays when we had just the pension to live on.

How best to manage? I found that paying everything on the easy-way plan works best. After rent, foodstuffs for me and the animals (one Golden Retriever and two cats) take up quite a chunk, as with everyone. I tried a vegie patch but only tomatoes and zucchinis were really successful. The best spots in my tiny garden are now taken by the roses, all bought at a wholesale nursery for \$5 each. I love my roses and vegies can be bought so cheaply at Coles in the throw-out section late in the day. Still-good fruit and vegies can be had for 50 cents to \$1 for four or five kilos of potatoes, carrots, apples, blueberries and oranges. Quarters of cabbage can go for about 20 cents, and peas and beans are often 30 cents per large bag. These can be a bit marked or a little worse for wear but are usually fine to steam, bake, freeze, or eat that day.

I buy milk either longlife or powdered and make a milky porridge for us all. Meat can also be bought at Coles marked down by as much as \$3 a packet – then frozen. Pet chicken mince can be bought locally for \$7 for 20 kilos and this with a really great hint from a GR reader – vitamix all fruit and vegie peelings and mix in – is very popular with the dog. Offal and bones can be picked up cheaply too and the pets love this also. Bread and fancy cakes are marked down after 6pm

to \$1 and can be frozen also.

After bills and food, beauty (or what is left of it) can be had very cheaply. I have found baby products wonderful for a sensitive skin. Baby cleansing wash and baby ultra care moisturiser are actually much better for my skin than the lovely brand name for \$30 more. I keep a very simple hair style, in the current fashion, that just needs a trim and occasional colour. A reliable friend with a steady hand and good scissors does the job very nicely.

We have a sale at the local town hall where you can buy everything for \$1 an item, shoes, clothing, handbags, and I bought a queen-size feather doona – a really great buy for \$1. The clothes, often name brands, are in big containers and you have to burrow through. Some people object to this, but to the serious bargain hunter this is no deterrent.

If what you buy proves unsuitable, take it to the local op shop. Also, if you do buy something unsuitable at the op shop, take it back and exchange it. Be pleasant and take some of your other castoffs at the same time, washed and ironed, to save face.

Hobbies are so important, probably more so for us on a limited income. Gardening and reading are so calming for the spirit. Jackie French's book, *New Plants from Old*, is a little gem I found at the local library. In it is all the information you could ever need on propagating, and written with common sense and humour. GR can also be found at the library, along with access to the internet. Other low-cost activities add interest to my life. With a couple of girlfriends, we have a video/McDonalds night where we hire a latest release for \$2 each and have a girlie night every two weeks or so. Another friend and I take advantage of half-price-Tuesday at the movies and we have a coffee and snack, but usually not

lunch, only when we can afford it.

Budgeting is not being mean, it is getting the best quality (and sometimes quantity) out of what you have. When I have a little extra I love to buy books, regarding it as a wonderful luxury. My friend would rather play the pokies, but that doesn't appeal to me. A new book or a rosebush or two and I am happy.

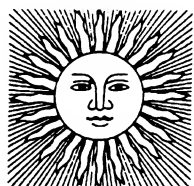
A couple of years ago I started to foster young children. This too has been a challenge, but I think it is easier to relate to children who are going through stress and separation anxiety when you have been there yourself. It can be so difficult and overwhelming coming into a strange environment and being away from family and friends. It is lovely to stay in touch with some of the children and see them coming along so nicely. The last two little boys who stayed here aged me 10 years, but they were so lovely and well worth the sleepless nights. Their antics could be turned into scripts for 'The Simpsons', or maybe I could write a book or two on the things they got up to, but this might put off other people interested in foster care.

I enjoy reading so many of the stories featured in the magazine; one of my favourites was 'A Truly Good Life' by Joan Thompson, Brookton, WA (GR 117), an inspiring story.

I didn't choose to have to start life over again at pushing forty. It was a difficult time, as we lost our place in life as we knew it. Only a couple of friends stuck by and it was tough to see the shame in my mother's face over my 'failed' marriage. The healing process took a long time, as did finding new friends and the odd lover. These days I don't rule out remarriage. Who knows? I may get lucky in that area too and recycle some lovely male who just needs a bit of spit and polish. an antique treasure in a male form? I dream on.

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# IS WHEAT FRIENDLY?

## ACHES, PAINS AND GLUTEN INTOLERANCE

by Jen Davies, Avenel, Vic.

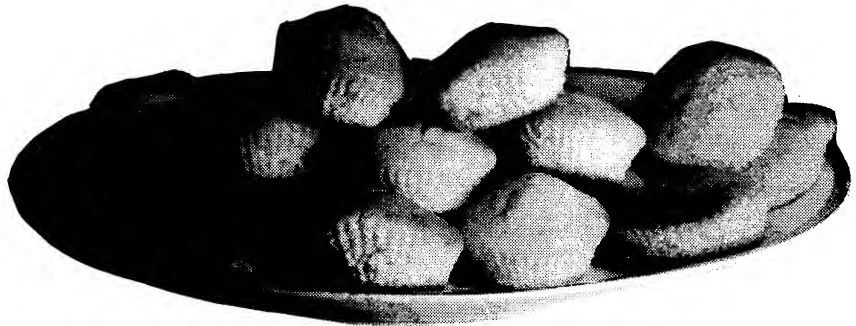
**'The stomach is the house of disease, and diet is the head of healing, for the origin of all sickness is indigestion.'**

*Tawaddud in The Arabian Nights, 850 AD*

Are you one of the many people who suffer from unexplained aches and pains, mainly in the abdominal area, such as bloating, dull or sharp pain, nausea, diarrhoea, constipation? Or do you often feel just generally unwell and lacking in energy after eating breads and stodgy flour-based foods? A common cause for such symptoms (otherwise unexplained) is an intolerance – sensitivity – to wheat or, more specifically, gluten of which wheat has a high content.

Gluten intolerance is rarely recognised by mainstream medical practitioners as the culprit for these frequently presented problems and people can suffer the uncomfortable, sometimes disabling, effects for years or even a lifetime because of lack of recognition. It is interesting to note that the word 'hypochondria' is derived from the Greek word for upper abdomen. Sufferers of wheat intolerance can easily come to believe they are hypochondriacs after repeated visits to doctors and batteries of routine tests fail to reveal the problem.

The wide range of symptoms that can be associated with the intolerance can of course be due to other physical disorders or malfunctions, but if a cause hasn't been found for your symptoms you might think about gluten intolerance and consider eliminating gluten from your diet. Most of us raised on a basically



Apple muffins – free of gluten and who would guess!

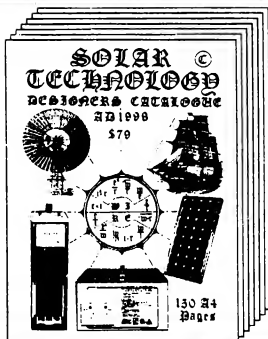
Western diet, in which wheat is by far the most commonly used grain, are at first aghast at the idea of not grabbing bread and baked goods at whim. However, with a little forethought and familiarity with a few basic alternatives, it's actually a piece of cake!

Gluten is a mixture of proteins that are present in some grains. Wheat contains gluten in high concentration and rye, oats and barley contain it in much smaller amounts. The elastic nature of gluten is what makes breads and cakes light and spongy, but it is not an easy substance for our bodies to digest and absorb. Experiments have shown that when large amounts of wheat proteins are given to 'normal' healthy people they become ill. It seems that people have varying degrees of tolerance to average gluten intake. At the top end of in-

tolerance to gluten is coeliac disease, whereby sufferers become seriously ill from eating foods containing gluten. The symptoms of bloating, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, weight loss and weakness are acute. In this disease the lining of the small intestine is seriously damaged (it's not clear why but there is believed to be a genetic factor) and so the normal absorption of nutrients is interfered with. Most coeliac sufferers have to always avoid all grains containing gluten, but some are able to digest small amounts occasionally.

Less severe than this diagnosed disease state, intolerance to gluten can manifest in many ways and in many degrees of illness. The nature of gluten intolerance makes it difficult to confirm as such. Unlike food *allergies* where physical reactions to foods are often immedi-

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ate and obvious, there is often no obvious link to an intolerance. Symptoms can occur well after food containing gluten has been eaten and they can occur in various forms and varying degrees at different times. People with an intolerance to gluten will most likely be suffering or will suffer from some of the typical symptoms. Individuals can vary a lot in their own particular set of symptoms, but several from the following range are common: dull or sharp abdominal pain, nausea, diarrhoea, constipation, irritable bowel, bloating, flatulence, headaches, fatigue, indigestion, irritability, mouth ulcers, lethargy.

So if you're thinking you may have an intolerance to gluten, you should consider omitting it from your diet for a period to ascertain if this is so. One month or so is a good period since it can take up to three weeks for gluten to completely leave the system. If you are gluten intolerant any symptoms should diminish or disappear. Some gluten-free adjustment hints and a few crucial gluten-free recipes follow to help you along. Do remember that all of the symptoms that are commonly associated with gluten intolerance can also be due to any number of other conditions that may require medical attention (gallstones, stomach or duodenal ulcers for example), so these need to be ruled out first. Also consider consulting a naturopath for advice and supervision – other factors or other food intolerances may be contributing to symptoms of ill health.

### GLUTEN-FREE DIET HANDY HINTS

- Ensure that your cupboards are well stocked with gluten-free ingredients and foods especially gluten-free bread, flours and the ingredients required for your favourite dishes and snacks.
- Take advantage of commercially available gluten-free foods when you can, eg: pasta varieties, breads and biscuits. They are sometimes a little more expensive than the mass-produced wheat-made products, but they prevent feelings of deprivation.
- Expect and prepare for problems when eating out. Especially difficult is eating 'on the run', so you'll need to have gluten-free lunches and snacks (popcorn, corn chips, nuts and fruit are handy) to take with you.
- When you do any gluten-free baking (eg muffins), double the mixture and freeze what you don't use.

- Read labels of every food product you buy – wheat flour is frequently used as a filler or bulker in foods you don't expect to find it (eg: soy sauce, seasonings).
- Collect a range of gluten-free recipes, familiarise yourself with the ones you like and make them for all the family if possible – you can bet they won't notice any difference (except perhaps with breads).

### GLUTEN-FREE RECIPES

For recipes requiring gluten-free flour use a commercially available gluten-free plain flour mix or make up your own by experimenting with the range of gluten-free alternatives – soya, corn/polenta, rice, potato, arrowroot, buckwheat, chickpea (besan), millet. Each type of flour has different baking qualities and flavours and although one flour can be used, often a mix of two or more will have better results. Foods made with gluten-free flours tend to be heavier and more crumbly but still delicious!

#### Gluten-free Baking Powder

(commercial baking powder may use a filling of starch or flour)

- 2 tsp cream of tartar
- 1 tsp bicarb of soda
- (for 225 g flour)

#### Pizza Base

- 275 g gluten-free plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- pinch of salt
- 1 egg
- 150 ml natural yogurt

Place the baking mix and salt into a bowl. Beat the egg with the yoghurt and gradually mix into the dry ingredients until a soft dough is formed. Knead lightly on a surface lightly floured with baking mix and roll out to a circle large enough to cover the base of a 20 cm round baking tin. Spread with tomato puree and vegies, salami, cheese, olives or whatever you desire, and bake in a 200°C oven for about 25 minutes until the base is cooked through and the cheese is beginning to brown.

#### Soda Bread

- 4 cups gluten-free flour or mixture of flours
- 1¼ tsp bicarb soda
- 2½ tsp cream of tartar
- 2½ cups of water.

Sift the dry ingredients into a bowl. Make a well in the centre, add the liquid and mix thoroughly to form a dough. Place into a greased and lined tin and bake in a moderate oven for 1½ hours.

### Quiche Base

- 200 g gluten-free plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 25 g rice bran
- 75 g butter
- 3 tbsps water

Put the flour, baking powder and butter into a bowl, rub together with fingertips until mixture resembles fine bread crumbs. Add water and cut in with a knife until the crumbs start to bind together. Form into a soft dough, knead gently on a lightly floured surface and roll out between two sheets of grease-proof paper. Line a 20 cm flan tin and bake blind in a 200°C oven for 5 minutes. Pour in mixture and bake a further 25 minutes or until filling is firm and browning.

**Quiche filling:** combine 75 g cottage cheese, 2 eggs, 200 ml milk 120 g can salmon, ½ a red pepper, chopped, 3 spring onions, chopped, salt and pepper, ½ leek, chopped.

### Apple Muffins

- 1 cup gluten free-plain flour
- 1½ tsp cream of tartar
- ¾ tsp bicarb soda
- ½ tsp mixed spice
- ¼ cup apple, grated
- ¼ cup currants
- 1 tsp jam
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 egg, beaten
- ¼ cup low fat milk

Combine all ingredients, place in muffin tins lined with patty pans and bake for 25 minutes in moderate oven.

### Crunchy Slice

- 110 g butter
- 60 ml golden syrup
- 150 g desiccated coconut
- 50 g rice bubbles or muesli
- 50 g chopped dried apricots
- 50 g ground almonds
- 50 g potato flour
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten

Melt butter and golden syrup in a saucepan. Combine coconut, rice bubbles, apricots, ground almonds and flour in a mixing bowl. Make a well in the middle, add eggs and melted mixture and stir well. Spread into a greased slice tin and bake in a moderate oven for 20 minutes. Cut into squares while hot and leave to cool in tin.

### AID SEED GERMINATION

Add a tablespoon of Epsom salts to the watering can when watering in seed beds – it is supposed to help germination.

# A WEIGHTY PROBLEM

by Ron McBeth, Wapengo, NSW.

I grow and sell lots of pumpkins at the farm gate, some of which are monsters weighing anything up to 20 kilograms, but how to weigh them without purchasing expensive scales? My three kilogram kitchen scales are simply inadequate to weight them, or anything else for that matter! We have gone to clearance sales, scoured the papers for old scales, all to no avail.

So what to do? Only one thing, make some.

Forget the high-tech springs and gadgets that break down. Memories of beautifully simple Middle Eastern and African balances sprang to mind. After scratching around the shed and scouring in 'boxes of tricks', kept lovingly for such occasions, I assembled the following:

- a 2 metre length of 50x25 straight well-seasoned hardwood timber (old roof batten I think)
- a 500 cm length of 50 mm diameter steel pipe
- a U-shaped bracket (equipment linkage of some sort)
- a bolt and nuts, a few wood screws
- a length of heavy gauge fence wire
- my trusty tool box

## CONSTRUCTION

Using this pile of junk I proceeded as follows. To avoid confusion in the text I use 'batten' for the scale balance-beam

member and 'beam' to describe a building construction member.

### Step 1

One end of the two metre batten was rasped with a file so the length of pipe would tightly fit over it. The pipe was then squeezed on. Two long self-tapping screws were inserted to keep the pipe firm.

### Step 2

The balance or fulcrum point was determined roughly by balancing the batten on a chair and marking this point with a pencil. Then, tying some sturdy string to a bolt fixed into a verandah roof beam (where I wanted to finally hang the scales) and to my new batten at the rough balance point, I moved the string carefully along the batten until the exact fulcrum point was found; this was accurately marked.

The string was removed and a hole drilled through the batten exactly at this point on the centre line of the batten. Then fencing wire was passed through the hole and tied over in such a manner that the batten assembly moved vertically and freely around the wire to fit over the bolt in the verandah beam. This is removable and at a convenient height when in use.

### Step 3

The U-shaped bracket happened to have two rectangular holes in it which fitted

over the batten (lucky eh?) and a hole in the bottom through which I fixed a bolt to act as a pointer. You will have to use your imagination for this component as it is doubtful you would have the same. The shape and weight are not critical and something as simple as a weight on a string will suffice.

The U-bracket was slid over the batten (still hanging) next to the hanging wire and on the other side (pipe) a weight of known accuracy (I used a two kilogram packet of flour in a light sling) was hung so positioned to be in balance with the whole.

Before doing this I would recommend that you consider making a permanent container or sling which you use every time to hold the goods to weigh - this is important.

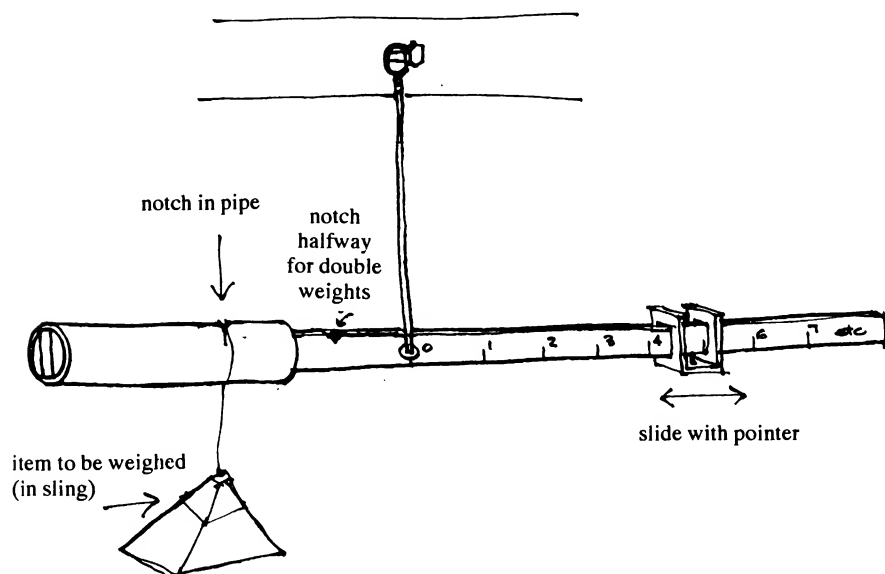
The point where the weight balances the U-weight was carefully marked as was the position of the pointer on the U-weight. The pointer position was labelled '2 kg'. By using two packets of flour in the sling I determined where four kilograms was by moving the pointer and three bags for six kilograms and so on. You should find that the distance between these points is the same. By using this module, and subdivision, you can extend along the full length of the beam without buying tonnes of flour! If you happen to have a ten-kilogram, or whatever, known weight of something, use it to check the respective graduations. Since I'm only weighing to the nearest kilogram, I find it accurate enough.

Another thing I did was to determine a point halfway between my standard weigh point and the fulcrum wire so that items above my marked range could be weighed simply by doubling the pointer readout.

### Step 4

All that remains is to add any embellishments, colours etc, that take your fancy as long as they don't remove or add any weight.

The only other tip is that you should experiment beforehand with different lengths of batten and materials to ensure they don't twist, bend too much or worse, break.





# GARDEN BOUNTY

## Eucalypts

by Cheryl Beasley, Karalee, Qld.

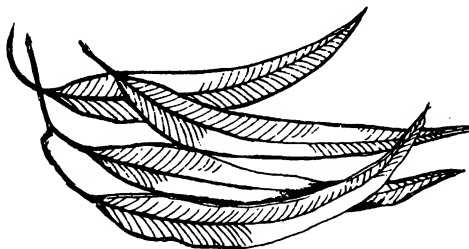
These beautiful trees grow prolifically throughout the country and can be used by almost anyone who has access to them. Eucalyptus oil is best known for its use in combating colds and infection. The oil can be dabbed onto bites and stings to soothe away the discomfort, or it can be added to the bath water for an all-over freshness.

The eucalyptus leaves have antiseptic qualities that can be harnessed in the kitchen for everyday beauty use. Plant a eucalypt and the young leaves can be used within the year.

### Freshening Eucalyptus Bath

Simply add a cupful of bruised eucalypt leaves to the bath water or secure in a muslin bag for easy collection.

Alternatively, boil two cupfuls of leaves in one litre of water for one hour. Top up water when necessary. Cool, strain and add half a cup to the bath water. This will soothe and help heal cut



knees etc and invigorate the skin. Very refreshing.

### Eucalyptus Tonic

For a gentle tonic that will help scalp problems make a eucalyptus infusion with one cup of finely chopped eucalypt leaves and 600 ml of boiling water. Pour the water over the leaves and leave to cool. Massage three tablespoons into the scalp two or three times per week.

### Oatmeal Healing Mask

oatmeal  
eucalyptus infusion  
1 tsp pure honey  
Mix enough of the first two ingredi-

ents to make a stiff paste, add the honey and blend thoroughly before applying to the affected areas. Leave this mixture on the skin for thirty minutes and then rinse off with lukewarm water. This mixture is good for spotty skin and can be used to benefit the tops of arms and legs.

### Skin Cream For Blemished Skin

1 tsp paraffin wax  
3 tbsp lanolin  
2 tbsp eucalyptus decoction  
1/2 tsp borax  
2 drops tincture of benzoin

Melt the wax and the lanolin in a pan over boiling water. Remove from the heat. Dissolve the borax in the warmed eucalyptus decoction and add to the melted wax, heating all the time. Add the tincture of benzoin drop by drop and then place into a container. Apply this cream after washing and leave on the skin for ten minutes before gently blotting to remove any excess oiliness.

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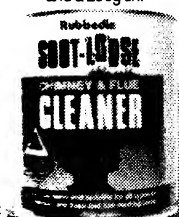
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# Livestock Health and Management

## Information You Need but Haven't Known Where to Ask

If you have queries on any type of livestock send them in and we'll get our panel of experts to research the problem for you. Send them to Livestock Advice Page, Grass Roots, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

### PEAFOWL RATIO

Could you help me out with management and care of my lovely birds. I have, I think, four males and one female. Do they like to be in a family unit and do I have too many males?

**Tania,  
MUCHEA 6501.**

You may already have found the boys are fighting because spring and early summer are the mating and hatching period and all the males will be vying for attention. It is customary to keep one peacock to three or four peafowl. You would be advised to sell or barter at least two of the males. Peafowl do keep to a loose social unit but it is essential to increase the female numbers. If you can purchase (or exchange) a couple of peahens you will be bringing in outside bloodlines and should not be troubled by inbreeding for a couple of years.

### BACKYARD SHEEP

A friend has a pet lamb she is desperate to find a home for, and has asked me to consider keeping the lamb on my two acres. When the lamb grows will it need company and will it eat my young fruit and nut trees? Has GR had articles on backyard sheep keeping?

**Angela Burns,  
GLENGARRY 7275.**



Sheep are flock animals by nature, so yes, your little lamb will begin to feel lonely before long and will need a companion. Ask at your local produce store or put a sign up in the newsagents for an unwanted pet, people often have single sheep they would be happy to give to a good home. Ensure the companion is quiet and free of vices like butting or charging. You should never assume you can re-educate such misfits.

Sheep will eat all the leaves as well as the young branches off unprotected trees and will even push their way in or under wire protection if badly tempted. Take the time to visit a local sheep property and see if there are wired-off trees you can view. It is difficult to envisage how sturdy your tree guards must be and how wide so as to minimise the sheep leaning over the wire to 'prune' the outer leaves.

GR has featured a number of articles on sheep management, helpful issues include GR 32 (general care and feeding), 69 & 70 (basic requirements and management), and GR 80 (backyard sheep care). Back copies are \$4 posted.

### LEAVING LIVESTOCK

This may seem a silly question but we have not long moved onto our dream acreage and hope to get some livestock soon. We have a nice roomy shed almost finished for a few ducks and chooks and hope to have half a dozen sheep in the orchard area for their coloured fleece. What we don't know is, can we plan on having an occasional weekend away without getting help in to do the livestock. Our budget would not stretch to this.

**Andy & Jane Lucas,  
KIALLA WEST 3631.**

It would be best to deal with the livestock separately. First the poultry. Separate the ducks and the fowls by inserting netting etc as the ducks will dirty the drinking water. Fowls are at risk of picking up gut problems including salmonella from the spoilt water and muddy surrounds. Provided the two species are kept separately and that the water is gravity fed (simple homemade system will suffice) so you know it will be replenished when low, your biggest problems are solved. Pellets or grain should be available via self-feeders. We are assuming the house is foxproof, and that the birds are locked in for the weekend even if they have an adjoining yard to scratch in.

Sheep do not usually need the intensive care that poultry require. Fencing must be escape-proof, as you do not want animals wandering around your garden, or worse, on the road, when you are absent. Consider attaching a single electrified wire on the inside if the existing fence is being breached. GR has had many articles on electric fencing which will assist you. Sheep must have access to cool fresh water, and if pasture is insufficient a little supplementary feed could be left. Hay would be best because if you left oats or mixed grain the sheep would be likely to scoff the lot immediately.

Consider working in with a neighbour. Many country people would be pleased to know they could call upon a reliable person to water delicate plants or check livestock in exchange for carrying out similar duties.

### GARLIC FOR HORSES

Several cloves of crushed garlic added to a horse's feed can help control internal parasites and improve skin complaints and asthma.

**Katrina Bond,  
BUNBURY 6230.**

## Farming and Livestock Books on the Internet

<http://www.ozemail.com.au/~merryhal/farming.html>  
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## GROUNDWATER CONCERNS

According to a CSIRO spokesperson, much of Australia's groundwater is at risk of chemical contamination from industrial chemicals, waste discharge, oil and solvent spills, detergents, agricultural chemicals, sewage and polluted urban runoff. Many rural communities as well as some major cities such as Perth and Newcastle depend on groundwater for drinking and other domestic purposes. Many farming enterprises depend on groundwater, either for irrigation of crops and pastures or for stock drinking water. River and wetland ecosystems are also at risk from contaminated groundwater.

Groundwater has been found to be contaminated with coliform bacteria, a significant human health concern, especially in areas where there is a high use of septic disposal systems. High levels of nitrates from agricultural chemicals are also of concern in some areas.

At the same time, The National Landcare Program has made a grant of \$70,000 to The Great Artesian Basin Consultative Council to help towards the development of a strategic plan for management of groundwater resources in the basin. A similar amount of government funding is also available. Groundwater pressures are dropping and many bores and drains are in need of repair.

## SEED STERILISATION

A 'breakthrough' in genetic engineering has been made in the USA. A Mississippi-based seed firm has been granted a patent for a technique that could sterilise the seeds of most agricultural crops. Currently, the technique has only been applied to cotton and tobacco seeds, but research is under way into using it for rice, wheat and sorghum. This will mean that in the future farmers will be unable to set aside seed from their crops for re-planting as the second generation of seed will be sterile. This 'breakthrough' is sure to have far-reaching repercussions in farming communities worldwide, particularly in Third World countries.

## ENVIRONMENTAL DILEMMA

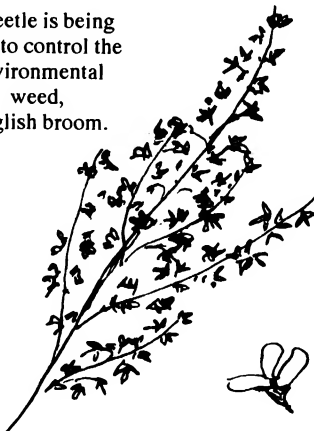
Concerns about the environmental effects of burning fossil fuels to heat

homes has led increasing numbers of householders to turn to wood heating. Indeed, recent figures indicate that 25 percent of Australian homes are now heated this way. The perception is that wood is a renewable resource and any carbon dioxide released in its burning is taken up by new tree growth.

Ironically, one result has been that in many Australian cities smoke from wood fires has overtaken motor vehicle emissions as the main source of airborne particle pollution.

A recent report has recommended the banning of all new open fireplaces in urban areas and stricter design standards on all new domestic wood stoves. An industry sponsored buy-back of wood heaters manufactured prior to 1992 was also recommended.

A beetle is being used to control the environmental weed, English broom.



## BIOLOGICAL ENGLISH BROOM CONTROL

In April this year a broom seed-feeding beetle was released in bushland near Beechworth (Vic) by the Department of Natural Resources and Environment to help control the weed English broom. This weed can invade pastures and forests and prevent the revegetation of native species. It also acts as habitat for pest animals.

An adult plant can produce as many as 20,000 seeds per year which can remain viable for up to 80 years. The larvae of the beetle feed on the seeds, thus reducing the seed drop from colonised plants. In New Zealand it has been found that five years after the release of the beetles, 47 percent of seed on affected plants was destroyed.

Further releases of the beetle in Victoria and NSW are planned.

## LABELLING OF GENETICALLY ALTERED FOOD

A proposed draft standard for the labelling of genetically altered food, prepared by the Australian New Zealand Food Authority, would not require labels on all such foods. The standard would require food to be labelled only if it was 'not substantially equivalent' to the conventional version. This would mean that a tomato altered to be sweeter would have to be labelled, but one altered to be insect resistant would not. The latter would be classed as 'substantially equivalent' even if it were to contain Bt toxins, virus particles, or genes resistant to antibiotics or herbicides. Those having concerns about this labelling proposal are urged to contact Health Minister, Gary Humphries.

## WORM POWER

Redland (NSW) Shire Council has joined with a Sydney-based company to develop one of the world's largest commercial worm farms which will dispose of 10,000 cubic metres of sewage sludge each year that would otherwise be sent to landfill sites.

Instead of becoming an environmental problem, the sludge will be transformed into saleable worm castings, around 3000 tonnes per week is the target.

The worms' environment is closely controlled to ensure the correct amount of shade, moisture and additives so the process takes place quickly and without odour.

Experts from other areas of NSW and from Victoria have already visited the site.

## HOT WEED CONTROL METHOD

Boral Energy is trialling, with the help of a Victorian dairy farmer, a prototype of a tractor-mounted gas-fired burner to eradicate a range of weeds, including parthenium. The method ruptures the cell walls and damages seed viability.

The implement is about half the size of a medium-sized slasher and travels at from two to five kilometres per hour while a series of burners direct the flame onto the weeds with blasts of heat of up to 80 degrees Centigrade. The material is not set alight, even in a situation where parthenium had emerged through dry crop stubble.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

**Dear Grass Roots,**

Re **THE FIXED SAIL WINDMILL**, p55, GR125. A word of caution to any reader contemplating building this device – I very much doubt that the author has built and tested this device, and I believe that anybody who does build it will be very disappointed. I am not a windmill expert, but during my lifetime I have had considerable involvement with boats and aircraft, both professionally and recreationally, so I have a good knowledge of fluid dynamics.

**Peter Schaper,**  
24A Frederick St, BIGGENDEN 4621.

*If any reader is interested in more information, Peter has sent a lengthy explanation. We also have further information from Jim Ogden. Please send a business-sized SAE, plus 2 stamps, and we will send you photocopies.*

**Dear Readers,**

Can anyone tell me from where I can purchase **TEMPEH STARTER**? It would come in a powder or dry crumbly cake form. The technical name for the starter culture is *Rhizopus oligosporus*. From books I've read it seems possible to purchase the starter in the UK and the USA. Is it available here? As I live in an isolated area I would like to be able to make my own tempeh.

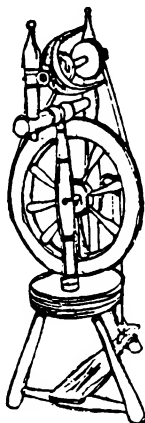
**Vera Radnell,**  
'Gap Creek', MS 15, COOKTOWN 4871.

**Dear Grassroots,**

Thanks for a wonderful magazine. I am desperate to find detailed instructions for the **MAKING OF A SPINNING WHEEL** and information on the spinning process from shearing to end product, as my husband would like to make me one. Can anyone help? I'd love to see an article about it sometime, as I've so far tried the library and hunted for a spinning group in my area, with no success.

Also, does anyone know which maple to grow for syrup, whether they grow in Perth and how to tap the syrup? And finally, does anyone know of a recipe for the once-popular Canadian/American effervescent drink called 'Root Beer' made from beetroot and herbs? I've advertised in the *West Australian* to no avail.

**Michele Franzinelli,**  
16 Charles St, MALIDA VALE 6057.



**Dear Grass Roots,**

I love cooking. I am vegan and am wondering if anyone has any **VEGAN RECIPES**.

**Mapule (age 10),**  
PO Box 122, DELORAINE 7304.

**Hey There,**

Just thought I'd drop a line to you all! I'm looking to link up with some people that I can one day call 'friends'. I'm 31, in a top relationship with a soon-to-be number two husband. I have six excellent kids (that drive me insane), but hey, that's motherhood. We're all in the midst of finishing off our house, have been doing that for four years now! My interests, well, I love my menagerie of animals, I love to garden and do crafts and just hang with friends for a coffee and a chat. I love Harleys and we are the very proud owners of one. I love to party, although I'm a much more scaled down version of the party-animal I used to be (must be old age). We lived for three years here with one lamp and a gas barby cooker (no wiring). Our hot water system is still the same, burn the rubbish and add wood in a brick construction downstairs in the yard, with all pipes leading to the house. We have four real walls, the rest are makeshift in our five-bedroom palace. Our pride and joy is our three and a half metre wide verandah, which is a mass of potted plants and has a blue gum up the centre of it. We also have two adjoining blocks of five and six acres and two dams. I love to write letters so anyone interested in writing to me –

feel free, I'd love to hear from you.

**T Alexander,**  
PO Box 895, KINGAROY 4610.

**Dear GR Readers,**

After reading so many replies from so many caring people, I wish to thank everybody for responding to my letter asking for **NATURAL CANCER CURES**. It was so very much appreciated.

**RB,**  
Serenity Dr, Maryborough 4650.

**Dear GR Readers,**

My husband, two sons (7 & 8) and I have been **TRAVELLING AROUND AUSTRALIA** for almost two years, after leaving our home town of Albury, NSW. We were first introduced to your magazine approximately one year ago by another family, also 'doing the wallaby'. Since then, we have purchased each copy and say thanks for a great mag.

We are interested to hear from any GR readers and people who would like to share and swap knowledge, make friends and/or allow us to stay with them and experience a different lifestyle in return for some help (hubby's an experienced builder!).

Our set-up consists of a 1982 Landcruiser – complete with boat motor on bullbar and punt boat on roofrack, towing an 18 foot 1980 caravan. We operate fully self-sufficiently, using batteries, solar panels, an inverter, Engel freezer, gas appliances etc and rarely stay in caravan parks, 'camping out' for at least nine months each year.

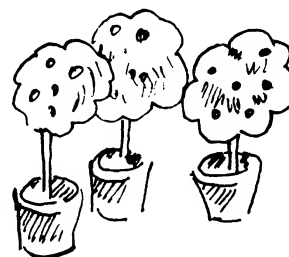
The children excel at correspondence school, we've collected gold, rocks, gems, old bottles, explored caves, climbed eighty-metre fire lookout trees, camped in the outback, climbed Ayres Rock and are as adventurous as we can be. We like to learn.

**David, Julie, Daniel & Paul Worsley,**  
PO Box 667, LAVINGTON 2641.  
Ph: 0418-578-413.

**Dear GR Folk,**

Where could I buy at a reasonable price **DWARF FRUIT TREES** to suit the tropical climate?

**John Rule,**  
PO Box 74,  
RUSSELL ISLAND 4184.



*We'd be interested to hear from any readers either growing fruit trees on dwarfing rootstock, or knowing of someone who does. We know of Bob Magnus in Woodbridge Tasmania. Is there anyone else?*

**Dear GRs,**

We are busily working away on careers and studies and such, but always **BUY GR AS A REALITY CHECK**, and as a pointer to our life when the kids are gone (only a few more years now). In our travels we have been taken by a few places, but being unable to spend heaps of time in any one area, are not sure which one might become 'our place'.

Our favourite spots are Tasman/Forester Peninsula in Tassie (and the Huon/Channel country), and the NSW south coast (Berry southwards to around Moruya). We're hoping that GRs reading this might be able to give us some ideas and insights into these areas. Of particular interest: communities of good people, and what sort of activities go on, commuting distances to main centres, costs of living etc. Also, we wouldn't mind buying some land in the near future, and start paying it off now. Maybe a reader in one of those areas has a nice bush block (not too far from the sea), just a few acres, and would like to sell to us.

**Phil Brown & Mischi John,**  
54 Livingston Ave, KAMBAH 2902.  
Ph: 02-6296-1778.



# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

**Dear GR Readers,**

GR126, page 48, letter from Keith Upward re eating snails. On TV news recently I saw where a toddler in Queensland **ATE A SNAIL** and died hours later. It appears snails have a lot of some type of worm in them and once in the human body they go rampant and I think harm the brain. This child is not the first person to die after having eaten a snail! I am wondering what the writer of the letter does to the snails he farms. Don't fancy them in a restaurant. Just a short letter this time, I do enjoy GR and read it from cover to cover.

**Marje Bates,  
DANDENONG 3175.**



**Dear GRs,**

To all those wonderful people who wrote to me re **SCHIZOPHRENIA**, a heartfelt thank you. It's a long steep road we all have in some way to hoe. My love, thanks and warmth to you all.

**A Kennedy.**

**Hi all at GR,**

Just a quick note to introduce myself. I've been buying GR for some years now, since a neighbour gave me a few old copies he had (thank you!). I was enamoured at the thought of an acreage in the bush, but was trapped in a horrible job and mortgage. Things have changed now though, but so did my dreams. I have always been deathly afraid of spiders and snakes and I didn't know if I could really hack it way out back of Bourke, so I compromised. I bought a house on a quarter-acre in a rural town as I figured it would be like a half-way house. Well, it proved one thing; I like the slower pace of a rural town, spiders and snakes tend to keep to themselves, so I'm getting used to the country and maybe I will be ready for the big move a little later on.

One thing I have to know: is there a nice way of getting rid of those parrots that pigged-out on my apricots, peaches and plums? The cheek of them, they didn't mind my helping myself to a few plums off the tree, but when I came with a bowl to collect enough to make a batch of jam they hurled abuse at me like you wouldn't believe!

**David Keen,  
12 Tyson St, CANN RIVER 3890.**

**Dear Grass Roots,**

I have been reading GR for a couple of years, and I finally have a tip that might help someone, instead of just making use of other people's helpful hints!

J Payne asked in GR126 for a **CURE FOR LEG CRAMPS**. I consulted my doctor a few years ago about the leg cramps I was getting, particularly after exercising. She prescribed quinine tablets – freely admitting that she did not know why they worked, but assuring me that they did.

Not wanting to take tablets, I bought some Indian tonic water, which contains quinine. I have been drinking a small glass of Indian tonic water with my evening meal ever since, and can report that it really does work. On the few occasions when I have not drunk the tonic water for a few weeks, the cramps have come back, only to disappear again when I started my evening tiple again.

Diet Indian tonic water is available, if you are trying to avoid the sugar in a regular soft drink. By the way, drink the Indian tonic water straight – don't add gin or you might develop other troubles!

**Bernadette Barnett,  
27 McCulloch St, CURTIN 2605.**

**Dear Megg and Mary,**

Pat Lever and you in GR126 requested information about **ARHAE PEA**. This is an alternative spelling for arhar; the split, dried seed or dhal of pigeon pea. This dhal is also known in India as toovar or toor. Pigeon pea (*Cajanus cajan*) is a tropical, fast growing legume, maturing as a two-metre high shrub, which is drought resistant and tolerant to a variety of soil types. Although perennial, yields fall off after the

first year, so it is usually grown as an annual from seed. Immature seed is cooked as for green peas and often eaten mixed with rice. Dried seed is used in soups and curries as well as dhal. Unripe pods are also served in curries. Leaves and young shoots are very nutritious with a protein content up to nine percent. These greens can be eaten raw in salad, steamed or stir-fried. They also make excellent animal forage.

Essentially, the pigeon pea is a tropical plant. Being frost sensitive, it may not thrive in the eastern wheat belt of WA, but is potentially an important food source for self-sufficiency in northern Australia. I cannot find the seed listed in any current Australian seed catalogues. The Seed Savers Network may know of a supplier.



**D Taylor,  
RMB 603, 2646.**

*GR 123 contained an article about pigeon peas.*

**Dear GRs,**

People ask me why I seem a lot jollier since my confrontation with cancer. I had a lot of time to think about life as I lay in a hospital bed for nearly four months. I saw people around me face up to reality or else crumble. It really makes a lasting impression on you as to how chancy life is, every day is a gamble really, and you don't know how it will turn out. But that is also the exciting component of life, to wake up in the morning and wonder what good and uplifting things will come your way.

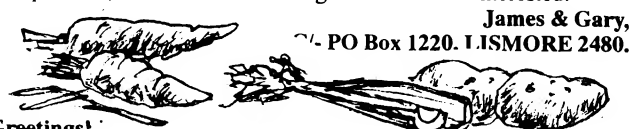
As I look out at the garden through the open window and take long full breaths to completely fill my lungs with fresh air I am thankful that I have another day to experience and that I have the choice to make it a really good one, as good as I wish to, and embrace happiness, this moment. Also, the realisation that it's the simple things in life that are the most valuable, not a Ferrari in the driveway or a million dollar bank account. When in hospital I saw people with both and they were as miserable as hell: it was the people with average means but a good attitude that fared the best. They knew the value of making the most of the things that mattered the most, not the things that cost the most.

Some people don't have the ability to gauge the value of something except by its price tag. I find that very, very sad. But that's just the way some people are: 'The curse of the rich,' I've heard it called. I value a day's worth as I close my eyes for sleep and feel a wave of joy that I've had another day and I've really enjoyed it. And it doesn't get much better than that.

**Roberino,  
Lot 4, ARRAWARRA BEACH, 2456.**

**Dear GRs,**

We are two queer folk interested in starting a **RURAL COMMUNAL SITUATION**. We have a vision of aspiring toward self-sufficiency with organic orchards, vegie gardens, goats, mutual co-operation, and communal sharing. Please write if interested.



**Greetings!**

I have been asked if I can come up with a way to **SOLAR HEAT WATER**. Problem is that it is on a **PACIFIC ISLAND**, the population is 7500 and the annual income is about US \$1500. There is no way to weld and the solution will have to be very basic. There is a great need for heated water for hygiene requirements and for washing. I hope that someone can help me to help them.

**Don Horsey,  
11 Lilley Crt, SHEPPARTON 3630.  
Ph: 03-5831-5423.  
dhorsey@mail.sheppnews.com.au**

Letters are accepted and edited at the discretion of the publishers.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

**Dear Megg & Co,**

I feel I must comment on Joan Marshall's letter (GR125) regarding **FERAL CATS**. It is obvious that Joan Marshall has never seen a feral cat or has any idea of what destruction they can wreak. A feral cat is not your average home moggie. For whatever reasons, being dumped or escaping from its home, a normal cat, to survive, turns feral. It grows to two or three times larger than a domesticated cat. It hunts not only for food, but for the sheer pleasure of killing; fears nothing, not even large dogs, except perhaps a human. I have often encountered, while walking my Rottweiler dog in the bush, two feral cats. One day I encountered one of them just sitting and watching our approach on a path, making no effort whatsoever to run away. I had to restrain my dog from chasing the cat, because I knew that the dog would come out second best in the fight.

Although I love animals, I was sickened by the sights on my walks. No less than ten birds, lizards and small marsupials dead. Killed but not eaten. It took us nearly two years to hunt those feral cats down and destroy them.

John Wamsley must be congratulated on his stand on feral cats. Feral cats, together with foxes and cane toads, must be exterminated on Australian soil, as all of them are disastrous to our native fauna.

**Maria Kanas,**  
121 Railway Tce, ASCOT PARK 5043.

**Dear GR,**

We are looking for any information or thoughts on eco-friendly ways to **CONTROL WILD TOBACCO WEED**. We have about ten acres of the stuff – some as tall as three metres. Do goats, donkeys or horses eat it? All ideas welcomed.

**Ceri, Pam & Mark,**  
PO Box 153, SOUTH JOHNSTONE 4859.  
Ph: 07-4065-3046.

**Dear Feedback,**

After many years my family has finally bought a home, with small acres. A decade of genius ideas can only now be put into motion and 35 alternative projects need to be completed.

We plan an energy operated home without batteries or toxins. Can anyone help us with **DIRECT CURRENT** ideas, or any innovative ideas, no matter how radical, for self-sufficient energy.

I am going to build a washing tub turned by bicycle motion, also I am going to draw spring water from 80 feet with a windmill to a 50,000 gallon holding tank, to gravity feed our 19th century farmhouse. I have to engineer a system which can turn off pumping wind power when the water tank is full, and combine wind turbine to generate direct current through a separate system, attached to the same propulsion turbine.

Also interested in ideas for home appliances that operate manually – mills, blenders, etc. Can anyone add to, or help me with totally alternative lifestyle ideas, 100% organic and self-sufficient. The only way to achieve this is to adapt your own lifestyle within the boundaries so as to give up all variations of processed lifestyles.



**Ben,**  
PO Box 122,  
DEBORAH 7304.

**Dear GR People,**

Your magazine is wonderful, full of all the things I want to know. We (my family and I) have recently moved onto a 140 acre farm, with a house, a unit, several sheds and even a cattle yard. We love having room to move and are avid gardeners. We hope to buy the block in 12 months time, but are having trouble getting finance as we only have a small deposit.

The local area is very dry at the moment, but still beautiful, and other farms are already grazing their stock on the roadside. I breed Dexter cattle and keep bantams, as I believe both have less impact on our environment. My name is Jude and I would love to hear from other people in our situation; busy, green and enjoying life.

An article on **DEXTER CATTLE** would be appreciated and information on what to do with excess milk – at the moment we feed it to the chooks and the neighbours. Also, does anyone know where I can find a companion pig sow or two (the small ones) and will they live in a pig tractor?



**Jude Wright,**  
'Mirrabooka', Hirstvale Rd,  
EAST GREENMOUNT 4359.

**Hey There,**

I have Silky bantams, Araucanas and plain old bantam chooks. I have a Muscovy, two unknown breeds of duck and Indian Runners, plus soon to be added to the family, Khaki Campbells. I have Japanese quails, peacocks, budgies, a lorikeet and galah, also have some guinea pigs. Wow! What I don't have is a vast amount of knowledge about any of them. I've read books, but they are mostly so 'text booky'. What I'd love, is to hear about 'real' knowledge straight from the horse's mouth. Things like: Why do they suddenly get sick and die? Do Indian Runners stand tall all the time? How long are guinea pigs pregnant? If you cross a black and white bantam with a Silky will you get black and white Silky bantams? Everything! I want to **KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT ANYTHING**. Not just what I have listed either, whatever your passion, maybe you can convert me, share your knowledge with me, I'm dying to know! Hope to hear from you soon!

**T Alexander,**  
PO Box 895, KINGAROY 4610.

**Dear GRs,**

Some years ago I bought some **ARHAE PEA SEEDS** in response to an article in GR. When I grew these there was little difference between them and pigeon peas which I have been growing for many years and are common in the Gympie area. The only observable differences were in flower colour and in cropping time (arhae were a little later). So the following notes are applicable to both peas.

As the peas are frost tender, seeds are sown early in spring either in seed-raising boxes or directly into the site. Treat the seedlings as you would any hardy small tree. By the time they flower in April, the plants will be at least two metres high and two metres wide. Seeds will mature by early June.

These peas are cut by frost. Protect the base by mulch and it will grow again in spring, with plants lasting three to five years.

In the garden and orchard they have these uses: being leguminous, they set large nitrogen nodules; the leaves create a natural mulch after frost; being fast growers, they are ideal wind protection for a young orchard; plants are easily controlled by pruning and grubbing.

For human consumption, the tender leaves and flowers are used in salads; young green peas are eaten raw or steamed; mature seeds are sprouted or ground into flour. I have not found a use for ground seeds. Maybe a GR reader can help.

And finally, all grazing stock relish all parts of the plant including the bark. Pests and diseases are not a problem. So arhae and pigeon peas are versatile, prolific producers of food for humans, animals and other plants.

**Athol Craig,**  
Gallilee Rd, MS 591, GYMPIE 4570.

**Dear GRs,**

Two years ago my sister-in-law died from cancer: healthy living, club squash and badminton champ. Two months ago my wife of 46 years succumbed to lung cancer: nonsmoker's life, acreage, mountain climate, alternatives.

My point? Be skeptical, don't expect the alternative lifestyle to be the complete answer.

**Tom Edgar,**  
Limberlost Rd, GLEN APLIN 4381.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

**Dear Grass Roots,**

A few years ago I met a woman who was making **DISPOSABLE STYLE NAPPIES**, in Queensland. She was using sphagnum and fabric instead of plastic, and worked out of a dome-shaped shed. Could anyone tell me where to find her? I would also appreciate any chestnut recipes (both varieties).

**Gayle Day,**  
PO Box 37, ARDLETHAN 2665.

**Dear GRs,**

Finding 'out of print' or 'never heard of' **BOOKS** is always a frustration for me, but help is at hand. A service called 'Biblioquest' will search Australian and overseas sources through a specialised computer service for a single search of \$10, a triple search of \$20 and a twenty-five book search for \$50. I can hardly wait to try it out. Give them the author, title, category, ISBN if you can; if it's a magazine – what issue, date, edition etc. Write to: Biblioquest International, PO Box 687, Bowral 2576. Ph: 1800-067-877, fax: 048-622-491. Email: bookfind@biblioquest.com.au

**Roberino,**  
Lot 24, ARRAWARRA BEACH 2456.

**Dear GR,**

Can you or your readers supply me with some info on the following? How to build a **WATER PUMP POWERED BY AN EXERCISE BIKE**? Type of pump, gearing etc. I tried a centrifugal pump, but it only operates at speeds in excess of 1500 revs and the peddler gets tired in two minutes like that. Any info on positive displacement pumps, mono pumps, advantages and disadvantages?

Any info on suppliers of wick-type drippers for drip irrigation. I saw one years ago, but I think they went out of business. Wick-type (like old kero lamp wicks) can handle muddy dam water – ie eliminates pumps and filters and power. Maybe not good for the national economy but good for the small people's purse.

Also any info on building/or suppliers in Zimbabwe – of ox-powered corn grinding mill. Again, to help the locals avoid buying power for such machines.

**Charles Gaitskell,**  
PO Box 579, STANTHORPE, Qld 4380.

*Sorry, we can't help Charles, but hopefully some readers can. The bicycle-powered pump sounds intriguing – let us know how you get on.*

**Dear Grass Roots,**

What a great interactive magazine! It's refreshing to read about people's experiences and say, 'hey – these people think like me'. A friend with a similar mindset introduced me to GR and it's such an inspiration.

I spent a day of discovery at the Sydney Royal Easter Show and was impressed with the dedication by all exhibitors to reduce the environmental impact by the use of recyclable and paper packaging on food wrappings, drinking cups, even down to waxed paper straws. Other **ECOLOGICALLY APT FEATURES** I noted were; colour coded recycle bins; the collection of manures for composting and fertilising the grounds; the collection of stormwater runoff for dust suppression and irrigation; structural designs to make the most of natural ventilation as opposed to air conditioning; and the use of plantation timbers in the construction. Rubble and masonry from the old abattoir and brickworks site was crushed and incorporated into roads and fill. Topsoil and resulting mulch from vegetation waste was also kept for re-use.

Extensive tree planting with an overall open plan and earthy colour scheme is quite soothing on the eye. The information that I gathered is only part of the huge infrastructure under the careful eye of enviro watchdogs, as we've all heard about in the media. You couldn't come away without receiving the message that big business and the individual have to take responsibility for our waste and to think beyond the present, just by leading by example.

Congratulations to Greenpeace, environmental lobbyists and the Olympic Coordination Authority for a job well done. I really believe the collected conscience is moving towards a more sustainable re-

source way of thinking. Here's hoping it's not too late.

I have a Syzygium species, lilly pilli, that is laden with fruit every year. Besides the native birds that it attracts I would like to know if there are successful jam/conserves recipe, or any other good uses. I tried to make a jam once but it failed rather dismally. Could anyone send me some ideas? I know there are a lot of wonderful jam makers out there, I saw them at the show!

**Stephanie Medway,**  
39 Hillside Cres, TERALBA 2284.

**Dear Megg & Crew,**

I first came across GR in Adelaide 17 years ago. What a pleasure it was to find a mag that wrote about and encouraged the sort of lifestyle we were living in our suburban setting at that time. Nothing way out, but nevertheless a much simpler sort of life than that of neighbours who relied on possessions and gadgets for happiness and who seemed to be incapable of entertaining themselves for more than about half an hour at a time. I always enjoy reading about other suburban GR friends as I can relate so well to them.

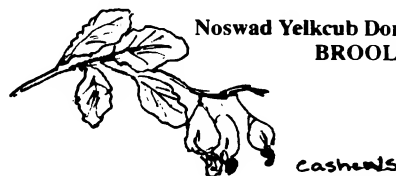
**Leonie H,**  
'Mt Snowden', RYE PARK 2586.



**Dear Grass Roots Readers,**

To prepare my vegie patch for production I first cover the area with builders' black plastic (which we kept after our house was built). This composts the grass and weeds which usually takes two to four months. (The sun cooks everything under.) Has anyone got any spare **PISTACHIO, CASHEWS** (and could they tell us how long they take to germinate?), also giant Russian sunflower and banana passionfruit seeds that they could send us?

**Leonie & Rob,**  
Noswad Yelkcub Domain, Lot 38 Timani Rd,  
BROOLOO via Imbil, Qld 4570.



**Dear Grass Roots People,**

In view of the drought, is anyone experimenting with, or does anyone know of, a **SOLAR WATER DESALINATOR**? My tanks are nearly dry, but there are millions of gallons of salt water flowing past every day. I would appreciate hearing from anyone with similar concerns using salty bore water. I seem to remember that the CSIRO produced a design about 30 years ago, but I can't find it now and neither can they!

**Peter O'Brien,**  
PO Box 110, BROOKLYN 2083.

**Dear GR,**

In your April/May issue J Payne wrote in concerning **LEG CRAMPS**. I wrote to her, but I also wanted to share with the rest of the readers. My dad, a builder, had been getting really bad cramps for ages. He was also told that he had arthritis in his hands so he read up about the arthritis and found something on **APPLE CIDER VINEGAR**. He started taking it and lo and behold the cramps went away. After reading more about apple cider vinegar we found it has been used since the olden days to cure cramps. So there you go. If you mix equal parts of honey and vinegar, put one tablespoon in a glass of water and drink this mixture twice a day your cramps should disappear. The catch is you have to keep taking it or the cramps will come back and it's an acquired taste.

PS. My dad didn't have arthritis at all.

**J Jones,**  
Box 158, KOORDA WA 6475.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

**Dear Grass Roots,**

My partner and I are about to take off on our **AROUND AUSTRALIA WORKING HOLIDAY**. We plan to leave around September this year and have been planning and preparing for the last four years. The four-wheel-drive and camper trailer are all ready, we are taking bikes and a canoe for exercise and entertainment. We both love fishing and bush camping. We would love to hear from people who have already done this or are about to do the same. The purpose is to see our country, meet people and get back to basic living. Hopefully, we will find our little piece of Australia along the way that we can settle on at the end of our holiday. We live on the edge of the city on half an acre. We have a few chooks, a fruit orchard and a small vegie patch. But we both prefer the countryside where we would have room to move, less pollution, somewhere we could fish, go walking, have a few animals. Feel welcome to write.

**Chris Baldock,**  
25 Edmonds Rd, ANGLEVALE SA 5117.



**Dear GR,**

Thankyou for printing my letter re **PIGEON PEAS**. I was inundated with replies, lists of seed producers and even seeds! I have written to all who gave their address. There were some who remained anonymous and I would particularly like to thank the people from Kununurra, WA, and Longreach, Qld, who both sent me seeds. Thank you one and all. I have planted some and so far have about a seventy percent germination rate. Here's hoping we get some rain in the near future to keep them going. We have had less than thirty percent of our usual monthly averages so far this year, but hope springs eternal. . . The drought has to break one day. Thanks again *Grass Roots* for being there.

**Lynda Corbridge,**  
2 Showgrounds Rd, MT MORGAN 4714.

**Dear GR & Readers,**

I am another who would like to compliment you all on a fine magazine. I am hoping one or two of your **WAGGA WAGGA** readers might be able to help me find some land with/without a large old house. I need something that is purchasable by vendor terms. I am also after scraps of material and odd balls of wool that someone doesn't want any more. With six children, I want a project of my own to keep sane, at the same time I will be recycling unwanted items into useful things for my children.

I would like to contact other single parents with large families, so if you are in a position like me, please write. Also, I'm writing a book (fiction) which is set in the country, outside a very small community. If anyone has a funny country-based story to tell, I'd like to hear from them. If I get enough I might be able to use some in my book.

**Jorji,**  
PO Box 195, MT AUSTIN 2650.



**To The Editor,**

I'm hoping readers will share with me some **ART AND CRAFT IDEAS** which I can use in my work with socially and culturally disadvantaged adults. Use of tools is restricted largely to the less dangerous, nonspirit-based and nonflammable (eg acrylic in place of oils etc), though I strictly supervise a small leather craft and pottery group. We are willing to try almost anything including the unusual and simple, traditional, contemporary and multicultural.

**Debbie Presley,**  
Ph: 07-5496-1111 ext 250 (BH),  
or, 07-3889-5560 (AH).

**Dear Grass Roots,**

If there are any GR friendly people in the **WOLLONGONG AREA** – or in fact anywhere – I invite you to write with the hope of becoming friends. My interests are music (all kinds), crafts (a wide range, even if I haven't tried them yet), reading (if the recycled toilet paper had print I'd probably read it), and my love of animals, nature and conservation and our environment.

I'd like to know about the availability of the following books, if not a kind soul who would sell or copy at my expense; **THE EARLY YEARS, EARTH BUILDER'S COMPANION, VEGIE GARDENER'S COMPANION**. And another request: wanted to rent – 3-4 bedroom cottage, 2-5 acres or more. Cheap rent, also long lease. Possibly south coast on bus route to primary and high schools. A lot to ask I know, but here's hoping! Anybody knowing anything of a small loom – how to thread, threads to use. Bought at an op shop and I'd dearly love instructions on the use of this loom.

**Sonya Wood,**  
12 Robert Cram Dr, BELLAMBI, NSW 2518.

**Dear Megg & All at GR,**

Thanks for a fantastic magazine that just keeps on getting better. In a world that seems obsessed with sex and violence it's both a relief and an inspiration to read it!

I wonder if anyone can advise whether it is OK for dog poo to go into the compost heap! I was told that bacteria/viruses or whatever could possibly be transmitted to humans in this way if the compost was used on the vegie garden, so I would love to know if anyone's done it and lived to tell the story!

I find it really interesting that most of your readers seem to be either with a very committed GR type partner or to be very self-sufficiently single! Isn't there anyone else out there married to a completely un-GR spouse? I would love to hear from anyone in this position as hubby and friends are all real city types whose eyes glaze over whenever bush blocks, verandahs, chooks or any other of my heart's desires are mentioned!

Also, anyone with children who is concerned about the impact of modern 'culture' with all the commercialisation (and Americanisation) of childhood – would love to hear from you as I'm sure many of us have the same worries.

**Ann Reilly,**  
93 Greenridge Ave, TEMPLESTOWE 3106.

**Dear Grass Roots,**

For a variety of reasons Tasmania is losing population. The up side of this is a great range of **CHEAP LAND AND HOUSING** and a marvellous lifestyle. As part of a drive to bring new settlers to Tasmania, some of us in the Tasman Municipality have got together a list of properties available in this magic part of the world. The Tasman is 80 kilometres from Hobart, has 647 kilometres of coast, stunning views and land features and good pasture. It includes Port Arthur and has a strong local community and many artists and organic and self-sufficiency practitioners live here.

If you would like the property list please send a large SAE to me, C/- PACE, PO Box 1373, Port Arthur, Tasmania 7182. Welcome to Tasmania.

**Neville Curtis.**

**Dear GR Readers,**

Does anyone have any information on the **SAFETY OF 'PERMAPINE'** (treated pine)? We have used a lot of it around our home and have become concerned now that our daughter is mobile and likely to be touching it frequently. Would painting it make it safer?

I would like to correspond with anyone interested in a more natural approach to parenting than the government child services advocate. Also, with anyone living a sustainable lifestyle on a town block. I would love a regular swap of ideas. Thanks for an inspirational read.

**Deb,**  
23A Angus St, PORT LINCOLN 5606.



# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

## Dear Grass Roots,

Has anyone had the **SHINGLES**? I have had them for eight weeks under the right shoulder blade. I have taken the course of tablets. Has anyone got an early model Kombi VW for sale? In the early '50s. Anyone got any early vegetable books?

A S Mann,  
4 Cannon St, TOOWOOMBA 4350.

## Dear GR Readers,

This is my first letter to your wonderful magazine. I love every issue. Have all issues except for the first six. Can any kind soul out there bear to part with them?

I like family history, sewing, crafts and cooking, make all our own jam etc. Love gardening organically. We are on a property and have cattle, horses, two dogs, poultry and fruit trees. My husband works away from home, he also fixes windmills and wells. We need a bit of a helping hand. Is there an energetic, honest, nonsmoking, can be social drinking couple (don't have to be couple) who would like free accommodation in the country, in return for help around farm? Plenty free time. For more information phone 07-4741-7229 after 7pm.

Kathy & Tony Palmer,  
Hazelrig Station,  
TORRENS CREEK, Qld 4816.

## Dear Grass Roots,

We are recent converts to your magazine and enjoy it very much. I wonder if any readers could help me track down a **TYPE OF FRUIT FLY TRAP** I remember using when I was a kid, growing up in western Queensland. The trap was made of clear glass, open at both ends, about 25 cm long. If anyone could tell me more about these traps, or where I could get one, I would really appreciate it.

Clive Newsome,  
1 McGeary's Rd, Thagoona,  
MS 592, IPSWICH 4306.

## Dear Readers,

Just writing to let you know about a book that would interest most readers. It is called **'THE GOOD LIFE IN THE '90s'**, by Mary Moody, RRP \$9.95. It is very well written and easy to understand. Topics included are: making your home energy efficient, composting, recycling, permaculture, companion planting, planting by the moon, organic gardening, vegetable, herb and orchard growing, preserving, animals, craft and health (including some alternatives).

I obtained my copy from the local show. If you can't buy a copy from the bookshop, try Boldacious Books at City Link Plaza, Morrisett St, Queanbeyan NSW 2620. Ph: 02-6299-6330. They also stock a huge range of rural books including alternative farming, aquaculture, viticulture etc. Craft books are also available. They do mail order.

Hope this letter helps someone find a book they are looking for. PS Carmen Morrow, could you please write?

Margaret Crowe,  
Burra Rd, via GUNDAGAI 2722.

## Dear Editor,

My daughter Jill from Adelaide introduced me to your excellent magazine when she came on a visit to **NEW ZEALAND**. Your magazine is of great interest to both my husband and myself as I have recently had a book published (*Where On Earth Is Kaharoa?*) telling of our transition from living and working in offices in Auckland for 18 years and then retiring to rural life on a two acre block. We have become reasonably self-sufficient, growing our own vegies and meat.

Our office colleagues thought it was hilarious that a couple of 'olds' were going to start a new life completely different from everything we had been used to. We used to buy our vegies in plastic bags. Now the enjoyment is going down to our fairly large vegie patch to discuss which to have for dinner (providing the rabbits have not got there first!).

Nothing is wasted as we have a very large sow who is only too happy to lend a mouth to eat everything past its grow-by-date.

I was always scared of farm animals, but no more. Ted and I have

been asked on more than one occasion to help herd cattle along the road. I am not talking of say 20 cattle – more like 150.

We wouldn't change it for the world. Mind you, we seem to be busier now than we were in Auckland and much less tied to a timetable. In fact, we often have to look at the video clock to find out what day it is. How's that for a wonderful life?

Sally Harman,  
352 Kaharoa Rd, RD2, Rotorua, NEW ZEALAND.

## Dear GR Friends,

Finally, we've made it onto our six acres and have just started our house. I've planted lots of natives, a big vegie garden and orchard. All was going so well, despite the dry, until **GRASSHOPPERS** moved in. I cover my seeds with a plastic frame and seedlings with plastic bottles, but as soon as they're removed the grasshoppers have a feast. The fruit trees and natives are also attacked. If anyone has any ideas on keeping them away I'd love to hear from them.

Chrissi Bisset,  
570 Vannathan Rd, NYORA 3987.



## Dear GR,

Help! Does anyone know how to grow damiana (*Turnera aphor-disiaca*)? If so, I would love to hear from you. Also, I would like more info on shared communities in south-east Qld and in WA (Bunbury and south). All information will be appreciated.

Krishna,  
35 Utrecht St, LOGANHOLME 4129.

## Dear Grass Roots,

I was delighted to read in GR 126 a letter from a vegetarian. I was wondering how so many GR readers can feel in touch with nature, and yet still feel that it is okay to murder a living, thinking being just so they can eat something of questionable health value that they happen to find tasty.

I refer to Fhyonna Fallon's letter about **VEGETARIAN DIETS FOR ANIMALS**. Yes, it is possible. A Melbourne shop called Vegan Wares (78 Smith St, Collingwood, ph: 03-9417-0230) stocks a line of products, including Vegecat and Vegedog. They also stock a range of microfibre shoes of much higher quality than most synthetic leather-like shoes, and of course they are animal friendly, and more friendly on the environment than leather with its environmental havoc from the farmyard greenhouse emissions to the toxic tanning plant. I've found the staff to be very helpful indeed, so it would be worth telephoning them even if you can't get to Melbourne. Sorry for plugging them so much, I'm not associated with them, I just think it's a great shop.

Anyway, back to the diet of your cats and dogs! Vegecat and Vegedog are essentially nutrient powders which you mix in with other ingredients such as grains and legumes to produce a nutritionally complete food. When made up with the recipes that come in the package, the resultant food meets the requirements of the Association of American Food Control Officials. As it's an American product I don't expect they have submitted it for approval in Australia, but one would expect the requirements to be similar. So yes, you can have healthy vegan cats and dogs! You might also be interested in the book – stocked by Vegan Wares, if you can't find it in a library – called *Vegetarian Cats and Dogs*, by James A Peden.

Russell Edwards,  
7/4 Walnut St, CARNEGIE 3163.  
Email: redwards@pulsar.physics.swin.edu.au

## Dear GR Staff & Readers,

I am interested in growing **PROTEAS**. Wondering if anyone could please tell me if there are any special conditions needed or if there is a book or such that is available to help me get started. We have property in north-west Qld.

Andrea Bennett,  
C/- PO, RICHMOND 4822.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

## Dear Grass Roots,

In response to some questions and comments revised in GR 126, I would like to provide some response:

About **CHAIN LETTERS**, I often wonder why they are illegal. Could it be that they actually expose the Achilles heel of capitalism? I mean, the principal of a large number of individuals sending a small amount of money to provide a large sum for one individual seems to be no less ethical than the activities of some large companies. I expect this to be an unpopular view, but to my mind, creative uses of capitalism such as chain letters threaten the status quo and the power of those with accumulated capital, because if everyone did it, it would probably work and allow everyone to become quite well off. Can anyone tell me where I'm wrong?

About **CATALYTIC CONVERTERS**, as far as I know, it is common knowledge that they are ineffective until warmed up and as a result emit toxic substances, but so do leaded petrol engines and diesels. There is nothing good for humans or the planet about internal combustion engines, but we are dependent on them and development of alternatives has been prevented, it would appear, by vested interests, until they can find ways to monopolise any alternatives, despite the devastating effects. Another aspect of capitalism and greed?

In response to someone looking for **PERENNIAL FOOD PLANTS**, I have capsicum plants that are at least five years old and continue to produce fruit. Like any other plant, they like old growth length pruned from them every now and then. They need feeding and each year they bounce back again as long as you can cover them with any old cover on a frosty morning before the sun hits them. Of course, I only get five or six mild frosts most years in this area. I save a few seeds from each fruit and plant them again, usually with about ten percent germination rate – not brilliant but enough to keep them going.

The other delightful plant is rocket. It is now a permanent edible weed that keeps going to seed and shooting again for ongoing supply of tasty green salad. It has to be covered with shade cloth in summer to stop burning.

**LEG CRAMPS**. The cell salt Mag Phos (6x) usually works well to stop that. Easily and cheaply obtained from health food stores.

**URINE THERAPY** is an accepted aspect of many Yoga disciplines and effective for many ailments. There is a book available on the subject from: Sayananda Ashram, RMB 4820, Mangrove Mountain, NSW 250. Ph: 02-4377-1171.

Also, I would like to mention the Mallard/Cessnock LETS group which is active but could always use more skills and people. Address is: PO Box 471, Maitland 2320, or contact me.

I am still looking for person or persons, long or short term to care-take/share my 30 acre bush block in the Lower Hunter. Visitors are also welcome but please phone first.

**Denis Rothwell,**

Littlewood Rd. NORTH ROTHBURY 2335.

Ph: 02-4938-2036.



## Dear Feedback,

**STINGING NETTLE**, I have heaps of this apparently very useful crop, however, I'm confused about how to deal with it to make tea. Many have told me stinging nettle tea has eased and cured arthritis. Do I have to bruise it? Can I simply uproot it and dry it? If any GR people are around South Gippsland and would like to help themselves please write.

I would also appreciate any information on herbal etc relief for **CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME** or feedback on any successful or unsuccessful treatments.

Does anyone know where I could contact **VINCENT GILLET** who taught me guitar from 1968 - 1973, first at South Oakleigh state school then privately at Mt Waverley? Love to hear from him.

**Megan Oates,**

RMB 1730, NARRACAN 3824.

## Hi Mary, Meg and all at GR,

Yes I've saved all my old copies of *Grass Roots* magazine from when on the farm at Cambooga Qld. Old habits die hard for me. I miss the old cover.

Living hard because of two strokes has its drawbacks. Living quietly to a budget I now get my GR magazine from Cleveland Shire Mobile Library. GR 124 is to hand; of course it's old news by now, but Feedback is great. I make my own bread, grow vegies and fruit trees which are being pruned back to a third of course as they become too big for this block.

I have strawberry plants and white Asian egg plant and garlic cloves **TO GIVE AWAY**.

Because of the second stroke one year ago our block of land, two building blocks all services connected, sewerage shack suitable for a GR type to plant tomatoes on such now and sell to tourists at Xmas time, or whatever, has not been put to sale yet. When I left it was OK, but could be vandalised, rotary clothes line bent and windows broken etc. It's across the road from a lake Mulwala NSW, which is now a tourist resort, over the bridge to Yarrawonga Victoria for fishing, boating, water skiing etc.

When left with six children my most-used book was written by Dame Enid Lyons, *Feeding A Family On A Budget*, which would be good for families now.

All best wishes to all readers and workers for your magazine. I'm not looking for sympathy – counting my blessings and smiling.

**Ruth,**

VICTORIA POINT, Qld 4165.



## Dear Mary & Crew,

Seeing it is your 25th year you might be interested that I wrote an article on donkeys in your second or third issue. I then became hooked on the magazine and have had published articles on drying vegetables and a very long one called 'Mountains of Mushrooms'. This was about recognising and preserving mushrooms.

I am still interested in donkeys and certainly in drying vegetables, especially mushrooms.

**Denise Moorhouse,**

RMB 6342, WARRAGUL 3820.

## Dear GR Readers,

We have taken the first steps to move to a more serene, satisfying lifestyle by purchasing a large acreage with river and crown land boundaries. Over the last two years we have completed the 'shell' and it's now a very liveable home. We can't move in for approximately 12 months due to financial commitments.

We offer **A FREE CARAVAN SITE**, power and phone available, to someone in return for keeping an eye on the place more closely than our neighbours can. Previously we rented it out and that was most disappointing. This is approximately 12 kilometres from Grafton. Anyone interested? Kindly write to us.

I love GR magazines and learn from them daily, many thanks.

**Elizabeth Andrews,**

85 Beatrice Tce, ASCOT 4007.



Readers should be aware that it is illegal to promote or be involved in 'pyramid' type chain letter schemes which claim massive incomes from a modest outlay. The maximum penalty under the Fair Trading Act is \$10,000. If you have been bothered by such letters contact the Office of Fair Trading, otherwise light the fire with them.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

## Hi There Folks,

This is a wonderful mag and I love hearing of people's experiences on their life's journeys. My journey has taken an incredibly unexpected turn. We lost our home in the January '97 bushfires. Of course we're rebuilding – I mean, it's home – but instead of building it ourselves as we did last time, we've got a 'big building company' to do it – and it's been hell!

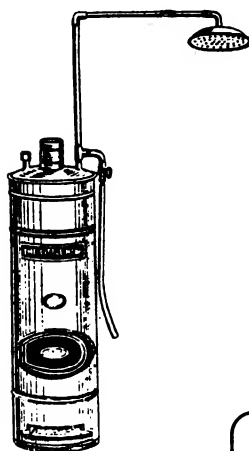
It's over 16 months since the fires and we've just got to lock-up – actually, we received the account prior to lock-up – isn't it weird how their builders and phone calls are always late but never their accounts!!

We've had so many people tell us how lucky we are to be building a nice new house and all those new 'things'. Believe me, I bless the day I got insurance, but as for feeling 'lucky' about losing our home. . . mmm, 'fraid I don't. Anyway, life goes on and we will be ordinary people again instead of 'fire victims'.

I was wondering if anyone had some information regarding **CHRONIC FATIGUE SYNDROME**? Is chronic back pain a symptom? Not just an ache but real pain? I've had this for years and seen all sorts of therapists, tried all sorts of supplements and done all sorts of exercises. Nothing shows up on X-rays or scans, but despite everything I do, the pain is still there and I'm quite debilitated with it. Any thoughts?

By the way, something positive I'd like to share with you. Despite this experience of ours we were overwhelmed by people's kindness. Most people are good and when you've been to hell and back, it is important to know that.

A M Hughes,  
C/- Post Office, FERNY CREEK 3786.



## Dear Megg,

Would any reader have a bread recipe for **GERMAN RYE BREAD**, not pumpernickel, just the commonly available bread one buys in bakeries and bread shops in Germany. Also looking for details of a **WOOD CHIP HEATER** used many years ago to heat hot water?

Roger Oliver,  
Lot 75 Grevillea Pl,  
GIDGEGANNUP 6083.

Contributors and correspondents who want letters or articles returned are requested to include correct postage.

## Dear Grass Roots,

I would like to pass on this remedy to J Payne for the relieving of **LEG CRAMPS**. This was given to me by a dear friend, who can verify this 100 percent. Just cut a lemon in half, and then rub on the affected part and within a minute or so, the cramps will have been eliminated. I can highly recommend this after the excruciating cramps that I suffered some time ago. I have also heard that vinegar will do the same job.

Gail Crick,  
2 Steinmetz Lane, KENDALL 2439.

## Dear Grass Roots,

To Tammy and Gregg, GR 126 page 37. If you contact me I will help you. To GR: I have **SOME SEED**: pie melon, grey skin pumpkin, mixed hot chilli, poor man's bean, gramma pumpkin, Madagascar bean. Send 5 x 45 cent stamps and SAE. Has anyone got any old Yates grader book? I will pay for the post. PS: no stamp, no seed.

A S Mann,  
4 Cannon St, TOOWOOMBA 4350.

## Dear Grass Roots,

Occasionally, I suffer from **GOUT** as a result of a build-up of uric acid in the body caused by purine-rich foods. My research has shown there is little information available on dietary control methods. If anyone has any information or source material on natural foods which contain low purine or which can lower or neutralise uric acid in the body it would be greatly appreciated.

R J Feuerriegel,  
PO Box 154, CAIRNS 4870.

## Dear GRs,

Thank you to all for a really great magazine, it has always been a dream of mine to get away from the city life and find a few acres and try my hand at self-sufficiency and GR style living. I have been an avid reader now since 1989, when I was introduced to your mag, and find it is now the only thing that **KEEPS MY DREAM ALIVE**. It is so great to read about everyone and all their ups and downs, those who persevere against all odds and make it, those who are about to make the big move, and those who are finding it tough going but 'hanging in' there. You all have become an extended family to so many readers and I feel all who write are friends, as we share each other's tales and stories.

This is my first letter to you, although I have written many but never managed to post them, hello to all out there in GR land. I am a 54 yr old Cancerian male, and if someone out there would like to write about their experiences on the land all letters will be answered.

City Slicker  
4/1A Kalaroo Rd, REDHEAD 2290.

## Dear GR Readers,

For the last five years we have grown **SEVEN YEAR BEANS** (also known as Scarlet Runner Beans) in the Blue Mountains of NSW. They yield a prolific crop and come up year after year as they produce an underground tuber like a sweet potato. They grow well in cooler climates, but do not do so well on the coast (maybe they would do well there in the winter). We have plenty of seeds to spare. If any GR reader would like five seeds, send a stamped, addressed envelope to us. We also have **GIANT RUSSIAN SUNFLOWER** seeds available if you send an SAE.

D L Burgess,  
17 Chivers Close, LITHGOW 2790.

## Hi Grass Roots,

I've just begun to study Ceramics at National Art School in Sydney. I am particularly interested in learning to make **TRADITIONAL WHOLE FOOD STORAGE**, cooking and serving vessels (all cultures), and on a larger scale – the use of clay in Eco-design. I'm also a keen urban permaculturalist and want to set up a system of flow-forms made of clay in my small inner city (rented) garden. Any advice, info, contacts etc on these subjects warmly appreciated.

Larissa Wild,  
51 Newington Rd, STANMORE 2048.

## Dear GRs,

We are keen readers of your unique and wonderful magazine and enjoy the Feedback section. About a year ago, we decided to turn the old guava plantation into a **RAINFOREST** and this has been a complex, time-consuming exercise. But now we have reached the stage of seeing something for our efforts, with the early plantings of trees and palms showing some progress, and we are gearing up for the next stages.

We are situated about 20 kilometres west of Noosa on a 54 acre subtropical eucalypt forest block and would like to make contact with others in the Sunshine Coast area who have already cultivated a rainforest, so that we can gain essential information. We have a few books on this subject. Our computer should be a valuable tool for storing information and any help in this regard would be an added bonus. There must be quite a number of readers who can help and we would love to hear from you.

R Scott,  
PO Box 25, POMONA 4568.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR Readers,

While at the One Tree Hill market just before Xmas, I bought a mango and a pepino for \$1 each. Great, I thought, two trees for my orchard. I had recently acquired 1.75 acres in the middle of the wheat-fields at Blakeview. Well, the mango died in the heat and the pepino is no tree but a large clump of greenery massed with small fruit.

Can anyone give me any **INFO ABOUT PEPINOS**, please? I have never heard of them but I am very interested in anything edible.

Raylene Gribble,

28 Duffield Dve, POORAKA 5095.



Dear Grass Roots Readers,

After advertising far and wide to no avail I am turning to you. I am living in one of the most beautiful places in Australia: Bendoc, a village of around 50 souls, is situated in the mountain forests of far east Gippsland, in the catchment of the mighty Snowy River. We border onto the superb Errinundra National Park. With mild summers and bracing winters, Bendoc, though considered remote, is only three hours drive from Canberra. Six years ago I re-opened the village's General Store. In that time I have built up the business and had three children. With the kids so small I am finding it hard to run the business. I have had great support from the community and I know it would be a great disappointment to them if I had to close the shop. It is the only one for 20 kilometres. I am seeking a couple who could **TAKE ON MY SHOP**. They need only pay for the stock (around \$5000). The building has been newly renovated with a new flat attached. There is heaps of room for gardens etc. The property fronts onto a trout stream. For somebody to discover an ideal lifestyle in a friendly community. Anyone interested in owning their own business somewhere out of the rat-race please contact me.

Michelle Hartmeier,

Haydens' Bog, BENDOC, Vic 3888.

Ph: 02-6458-1502.

Dear GR,

It's great to be back - we have started reading GR again after a lapse of ten years. I didn't think it had been that long but after going through past copies the last GR we purchased was in 1988. We were avid readers for about nine years. In the last ten years we have had three children (9, 6 and 5) and moved to a five-acre block on the outskirts of a small country town. We have had a fairly peaceful and settled existence since then. This is about to change, as we plan to travel Australia in early 1999 for approx 6-12 months. The children will be home schooled, we will be towing a small caravan and plan to stay in campsites not caravan parks. At this stage I have talked to many people who have travelled Australia, but not with children in tow. I am asking any readers who have **TRAVELLED WITH CHILDREN** to drop me a line on how they managed, what were the highs and lows, any advice or tips from your experiences would be most welcome.

Karen Sinclair,

C/- PO, COBARGO 2500.



Dear Grass Roots Readers,

I've just turned 86 this month. I have a brand new Hawkings-Futura space-age **PRESSURE COOKER**, but I do not have a book of operating instructions.

I do not like to try to use it. Even though I live alone, I would not like to cause any trouble if the cooker should blow up, through my lack of the proper operating instructions.

Please, is there anyone who has an instruction book? I would be willing to pay for a copy to be taken of it. I would greatly appreciate

it if anyone would help this lonely old man. I have lived alone for 28 years. From September to mid December 1997 I endured six operations in two and a half months. The sixth operation was the amputation of my left lower leg below the knee. I am confined to a wheelchair. I find it hard to stand for long periods on an artificial leg when I cook.

The pressure cooker was made in India around 12 years ago. Thank you for your wonderful magazine. I have been reading it for the last 18 years. I have submitted some articles over the past 10-12 years which were graciously published to help others.

Arthur Fergusson,

14 Long Gully Rd, GRANDCHESTER 4340.

Ph: 07-5465-5154.

Dear Grass Roots,

I have been a GR reader for years now and thought someone may be able to help me fulfil the next leg of my 'journey'. My current city lifestyle no longer satisfies me, so it's time to move on. My plan is to leave Melbourne late '98/early '99. I would love to find work and preferably self-contained accommodation (initially) in a rural area either in Tasmania, Victoria or NSW. I would prefer low rent or **NO RENT IN EXCHANGE FOR WORK** on the property, with time to also have a part-time job or study in a nearby town/city.

I yearn for chooks, homegrown vegies and chopping wood (to name a few). I am a 37 years young, single, female with no ties. My life and work skills are many and varied. My nature is down-to-earth (I'm a Taurean) and I'm keen to learn how to get back to basics again. If anyone can offer ideas or suggestions, please drop me a line. My eventual goal is to live in a communal environment once I've gone through the withdrawal symptoms of city living.

Debra Little,

4/292 Barkly St, ELWOOD 3184.

Dear Grass Roots,

We are a family of six living in Perth. My husband and I have always longed to live in a **QUIET COUNTRY TOWN IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA**. We are looking for acreage at a reasonable price.

We are totally burnt-out after running a seven-day-a-week business which we are currently trying to sell.

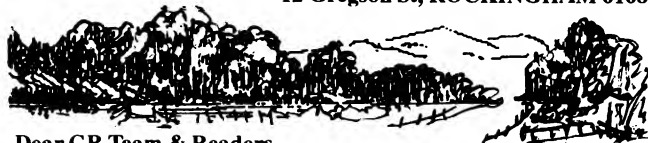
On a rare day off my husband and I drive to unexploited areas and gaze in real estate windows, and that is as far as we have got. We are confused and have no idea where to buy. We aren't looking for trendy expensive areas.

We would dearly love to hear from city people who have moved to the country: problems they may have encountered and pitfalls to watch for. Was it a successful move for them? What makes their town pleasant for them?

Any correspondence will be greatly appreciated as it may point us in the direction we may need to go. We are looking at self-sufficiency. Thank you for a great magazine, we enjoy it immensely.

Julie Bessant,

12 Gregson St, ROCKINGHAM 6168.



Dear GR Team & Readers,

I first found your magazine in my local library last year so I am only a newcomer, but have enjoyed it ever since. I find it very informative and very hard to put down so thank you for such a great magazine.

I am writing to ask for the help of readers, I am doing a course in journalism and would like to write an article on how **SELF-SUFFICIENT** we can become **IN THE 90s**, as this is a topic I have a great interest in. So I would love to hear from anyone who feels they are self-sufficient, to any degree, who may have information that would help me with my story. I would really appreciate any help anyone can give me.

Sue Harrison,

209E Fitzroy St, WALCHA 2354.

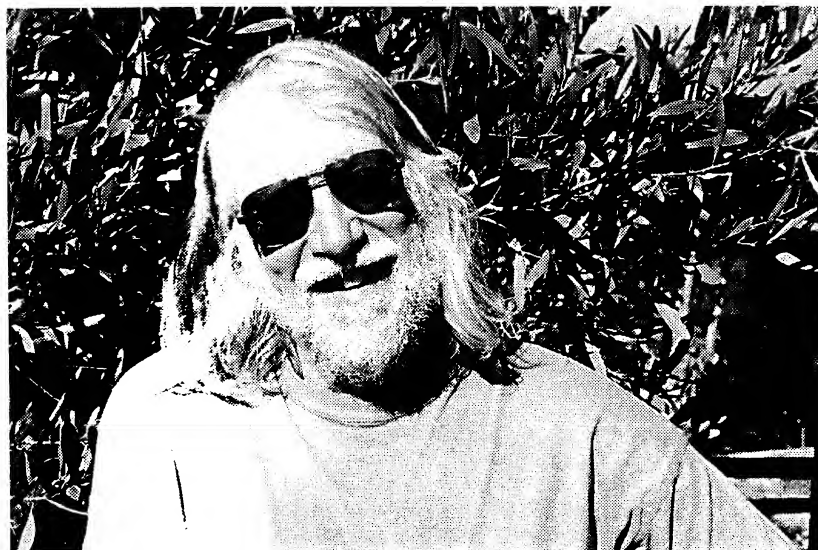
# LOOKING FOR MY LADY

by Arthur G Pettifer, Lillian Rock, NSW.

Have you noticed, over the last few years, how the number of contact advertisements in *Grass Roots* has decreased? Is it because those of us who have been looking and advertising for a few years, have become disillusioned? Have most of us come to realise, after all the people that we have met, that success in advertising for a mate is not really possible?

My experience tells me that there are too many problems involved with trying to get together with a new mate, especially if we are getting on just a little bit. He likes this and she likes that. Whose dinner service shall we use? Whose furniture shall we use? Which house shall we live in, his or hers? Should we start together in a new house? More problems if there are children involved, especially two lots. I am beginning to think that looking for a suitable partner is like looking for a needle in a haystack, if the possible future 'she' will excuse the expression.

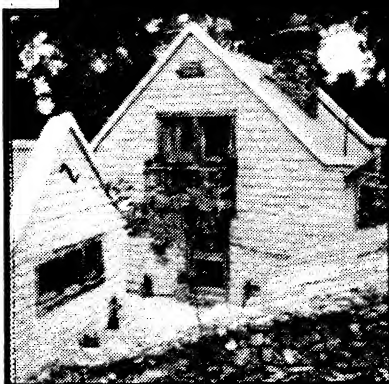
I have been alone since 1980 and my first advertisement in GR was I think some time in 1990. I am still alone. Now, I am not saying that I am old, at fifty-eight I feel so good and ready for most things. I am told by my friends that I look good and I should have no trouble in finding someone. How wrong they are? What is wrong with the writer, you may ask? I cannot really say as we all perceive differently. I think the trouble is that we all think differently, our values,



needs and interests are different. We haven't had time to grow together, to get to know the nitty gritty details of each other. I have written so many letters over the years and I have answered quite a few advertisements. I have met quite a few of my advertisement answerers. It's expensive too, phone calls, travelling, road, rail and air.

It takes time, and most of all, it's disappointing. It is the dreadful disappointment that tends to make me feel really bad. Things seem to be getting on all right, but then something happens; it seems either I say something or I do something which brings it all to an end. I have had two near successes in the last

year. A year ago, a lady answered my advertisement and soon moved in with her eight year old son. They stayed for eight months and then all of a sudden, left to go back from whence they came. Whose fault? Probably both our faults. Recently, another lady came to visit, it was all very nice, but again, I said or did something that was wrong and that has now fallen through. I have only mentioned two of the failures in the long list, but do I keep going? Is it worth all the effort and upset? After all, it is upsetting for them too. Have I the right to keep on causing this upset? I think that I am going to have to get used to the idea that I shall be alone for the rest of my life.



**If you want to save money, labour,  
energy & the environment  
DON'T build a single storey  
Get our plans book first!**

With thousands of customers Australia-wide and now overseas, our book will surely provoke your thinking

Send **\$16.50**, (includes postage) to:  
Peter Lees, Architect & Builder,  
15 Woolnoughs Road, Porcupine  
Ridge, Daylesford, Vic 3461  
Phone 03 5348 7650  
Mobile 019 136 998

**40** photos, text, prices and plans of small to large homes (or sheds, studios, whatever).

Unlimited layout possibilities, catering for mudbrick, rammed earth, timber, stone or brick and in particular the needs of owner builders.



# WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT YOUR LOCALE?

## URALLA

by Helen Bell, Uralla, NSW.

Uralla has two things that particularly enthrall me – its history and its seasons. Summer's tawny grass, lush trees and spattered basalt rocks; autumn's glowing colours of gold, lemon, ochre and russet red, wild apples sprouting by the way-side to feed birds fleeing south. Winter's greyish sleet, stark black trees and white, hoary frost is harsh on newcomers. Just when one forgets what green looks like, the pastures bloom again. Horses and sheep browse contentedly.

Uralla is an 1870s town, bright with craft, antique and pottery shops, gold fossicking area, quaint churches, thirty-three heritage buildings, a Chinese miners' graveyard and camp.

One main street café is filled to the ceiling with prize-winning preserves, another has poets' readings near its giant papier-maché teapot. Thunderbolts Inn welcomes travellers across its ancient wooden boards with a crackling fire, fine food and old prints of the area. McCrossin's Mill is a special museum displaying early industrial tools, Chinese Joss House and superb paintings of Thunderbolts' last hours.

This heritage strengthens my identity and the seasons illumine my inner spirit. I am content here.

## BLACKHEATH

by Wanda Nahani, Blackheath, NSW.

I live in Blackheath, Blue Mountains NSW. A short walk in any direction from the village brings me to the pristine wilderness of the Blue Mountains. Blackheath is 1065 metres above sea level and has stunning views of sandstone cliffs, waterfalls, lush forest valleys and farmland. The air is always crisp and clean. Often in the mornings and evenings, mist engulfs the mountains. It feels magical and refreshing. Many diverse flowering natives such as waratahs, grevillias, hakea, bottlebrush, banksia, isopogons and mountain devils thrive here. As do flowering bulbs, rhododendrons, apples, stonefruit, herbs and many vegetables. There is abundant

wildlife, especially birds. A quiet walker will see lyrebirds. There is always somewhere new and beautiful to discover when bushwalking.

The village has two hardware shops where I can buy everything I need to satisfy my *Grass Roots* tendencies, and after a days work in the garden or after a bushwalk I can relax with a coffee in one of Blackheath's excellent cafés.

## KENDALL

by Gail Crick, Kendall, NSW.

A poet's paradise would definitely describe the area called Kendall. It is very conveniently situated between two thriving towns: Port Macquarie to the north, and Taree, a leisurely drive to the south.

The small town businesses can supply a wide variety of things to the local

community. The surrounding district is also rich in livestock, pasture lands, and prolific birdlife. The Camden Haven River flows lazily through this area. In the distance are the majestic blue to purple mountains. A large mural on the side of an old stately bank building is bringing to life the poems of Henry Kendall. Another small area in the town has been allocated with seats, so that people can rest and observe.

Commuters are able to take advantage of the XPT which stops twice a day, seven days a week and is very centrally located.

Market days are held fortnightly at the local high school. The local golf club, conveniently designed, is a short distance from the main turn-off at Kew.

Climatic conditions are fairly moderate, with a generally good annual rainfall.

Having now retired here,  
Where else should I be,  
But, writing about Kendall,  
A novice poet like me!

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The writer of the letter we judge the best for the year – the one that most makes our office full of would-be travellers want to get up and go there – will receive a free GR subscription for themselves and one for their local school, library, or environment group.

It might help your cause if you send a photo that epitomises what you love about your area.

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# ELECTRIFY THAT STONE WALL!

by Andrew FitzSimmons, Wattamolla, NSW.

Some time after purchasing our place in Kangaroo Valley, I realised that we were right at the epicentre of stone wall building in this valley. There is not really a lot of stone walling here, but what there is represents extraordinary effort on the part of previous generations of owners. Not only beautiful, but remarkably effective; certainly historically important. Restoring these walls to their previous beauty and utility has become a most satisfying focus.

We have some hundreds of metres of walling, the full extent only became apparent after a bushfire swept through and cleared the undergrowth. Not only were these beautiful walls hidden, they had become a seedbed for every noxious weed imaginable. Some 50 or 60 years ago new technology, netting fence, had

been erected about a metre out from the stone walls. This innovation became their death knell, the space between netting and stone wall, now ungrazed, became choked with growth. Over time, privet, blackberries, lantana, thistles etc had all taken hold and now spilled out and up, three to four metres wide and at least two metres high.

With the stone fences inaccessible and no longer relied upon, frost, water, wind and growth all started to take a toll.

The solution, though labour intensive, was relatively simple, cheap, and, it would appear, final.

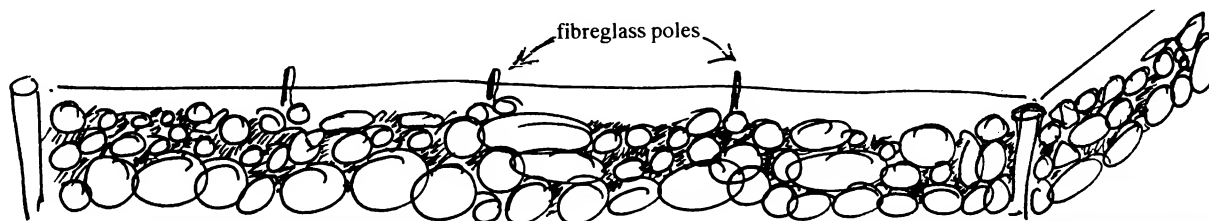
- Poison. (I know there is a down side, but, in this instance, I declare it necessary.)
- Remove old netting fence and take to the tip for recycling.

- Wade in with a chainsaw, clippers etc. In some circumstances, throw in a match.
- Work along both sides, repairing carefully. Visiting family and friends can sometimes be inveigled into assisting in this very satisfying work.

Now the classy part, new technology to the rescue: electrify your stone wall.

- Top the wall with a single hot wire suspended on short fibreglass poles.
- Step back, stretch your aching back and admire.

Not only will this wall be virtually never tested by any animal, you now have somewhere to place any rocks you come across. Depending on the season, some hand-weeding very close to the wall may be needed occasionally. Brief intensive grazing or a rare application of poison are other alternatives.



Are your farm animals the dull, boring, run-of-the-mill type? Well. . .

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## REXA GOES WILD

A story for GR kids

by Jen Davies, Avenel, Vic.

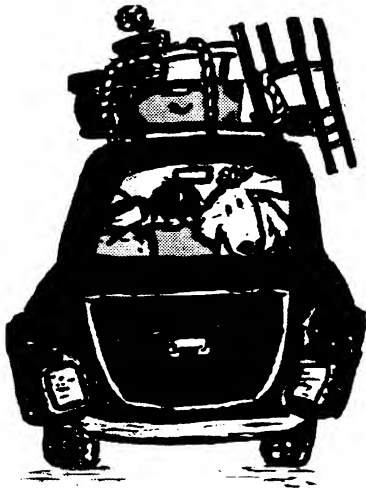
'No Rexa boy, that's my seat!' Letty laughed as her dog tried to climb into her car seat. Letty's pet dog Rexa is a bouncing big red heeler who seems to think he is actually a person in Letty's family. Letty's dad persuaded Rexa to squeeze into the space left for him in the back of their car piled high with stuff that couldn't fit into the removalist truck. The day had come for this family to move from their house in the city to a new life on an orchard in the country.

'Goodbye house, goodbye next-door neighbours, goodbye pollution...' Letty sang and waved as their car drove off. There was a half-hearted 'woof woof' from Rexa. Letty couldn't tell if he was grumpy because he was sad about leaving his home or because he hated being squashed in the back of the car. Letty was afraid that her street-wise dog would hate moving from their home in the city, that he would

have nothing to do in the country, that he would miss his dog friends from the neighbourhood too much, that he would not have anything to watch and bark at, and how awful it was that he would never be able to dig up all the old bones he'd buried throughout the garden over the years! Everyone kept saying things to Letty

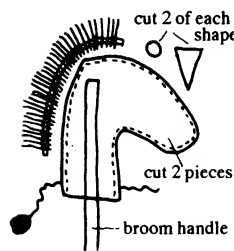
like: 'Won't Rexa just love living in the country?', and, 'Won't Rexa just be in his element?'. Letty wasn't so sure.

They drove past houses and building and things that were familiar. It was taking a long time. Rexa and Letty were both feeling bored and impatient, but then Rexa started to sound REALLY excited about something. 'Woof! Woof! Woof!' All Letty could see out of the window were trees and sheep and green paddocks and cows and more green paddocks. A little while later her mum was saying, 'Here we are! Now Letty you can show Rexa his new home and try to settle him in.' Letty didn't need to - Rexa had a brief sniff around the house, then he simply bolted out through the gate separating the house yard from the orchard and ran up and down it as if he had known the place all his life. Finally, he took a magnificent flying leap into the river backwater and dog-paddled across and back again. Letty watched wide-eyed. 'I think he will be happy here,' she smiled.



## MAKE A PET HORSE

There are a lot of things involved in keeping a real pet such as making sure you have enough time to feed, groom and exercise it. Try making this horse for a toy pet - you don't have to feed it or groom it, but you can ride it!



### You will need

- fabric glue
- wool for mane
- about 1 metre of fabric
- felt for ears and eyes
- stuffing (old stockings, or whatever)
- string and/or strong tape
- sticky tape
- a broom handle

### What To Do

**The Head:** Fold the metre of fabric in half and draw on it a shape similar to that shown in the diagram, but bigger of course so it will be about the size of a real horse's head. Cut the shape out (there will be two pieces because the fabric was folded over).

**The Mane:** Cut 5 cm pieces of wool - about 50 or so. Line the pieces up along a piece of sticky tape as the diagram shows.

**Putting Together:** Place the mane inside the two pieces of 'head' fabric. Sew around all edges except the 'neck' edge. Turn inside out and fill head firmly with stuffing, leaving neck end of fabric loose. Put broom handle through the neck edge, pushing up as far as possible. Gather neck end and wind strong tape and/or string around several times. Secure.

**Decorations:** Cut two pieces of felt into triangle shapes for ears. Stick these on horse's head with fabric glue (they will dangle down - if you want ears that stick up you could make the triangles firm with stiff cardboard). Cut two pieces of felt into circle shapes for eyes and stick onto either side of the head. Gallop away!



Violet riding her pet horse Daisy

## BOOK REVIEW

Alice and Aldo

by Alison Lester

Learn the alphabet with Alice and her pet horse (a toy pet). This is a delightful picture book in which the main narrative follows the activities of a little girl and her toy pet from Awakening in the morning to producing Zzz's at bedtime. As well as that - around the borders - are a range of images and words that start with the letter that is the focus of each page.

Little Ark Books, Allen & Unwin. RRP \$10.95 P/b.



# IN THE KITCHEN

Dried beans, peas and lentils, known as pulses, have for thousands of years been a significant part of the diet of many cultures. In Australia, until recent years, their use has been restricted, in the main, to vegetarians. Now, however, increasing awareness of their versatility and nutritional value is seeing them being consumed more widely.

Pulses contain the B group vitamins niacin (B3), thiamine (B1) and riboflavin (B2), along with iron, potassium and calcium. Soya beans also contain vitamin K. Contrary to widespread belief, pulses are high in protein (with soya being the highest), but, by themselves do not have the correct balance of amino acids (component molecules of protein) to enable the protein to be assimilated in the body. They need to be eaten with other foods, usually cereal grains. Cereals are low in the amino acid lysine of which pulses contain ample. Pulses are low in the amino acid methionine of which cereals contain ample. Thus, the two combine in such meals as baked beans on wholemeal toast; or beans with brown rice, buckwheat, millet, wholemeal pasta or pancakes, to provide complete protein. The proportions often recommended are one part of pulses to three of grains. Other complementary combinations to obtain complete protein are pulses with nuts, seeds or milk.

Pulses are high in carbohydrates and low in fat, with the exception of soya which contains little carbohydrate and 18-22 percent polyunsaturated fat.

## SOAKING

Many of the pulses need overnight soaking before they are cooked: chickpeas, brown kidney beans, borlotti, pinto, lima, red kidney and soya beans. Soak mung and aduki beans for one hour and haricot (or navy) beans for four hours. Black-eyed beans, lentils and split yellow and green peas are usually cooked without prior soaking. In all cases, wash pulses well before soaking or cooking and discard twigs, stones and other debris.

Beans will triple their size when soaked. Use four parts water to one of beans. Most books advise cooking beans in the water they have soaked in, topped up so the water just covers the beans, in order to retain any nutrients

that have seeped into the water. John Downes, however, in his book, *Natural Tucker*, advises discarding the soaking water which will contain 'anti-nutritive factors', and washing beans well before cooking. We have also seen this suggested elsewhere as a means of reducing the flatulence-causing properties of the cooked dish.

## COOKING

### Soaked Pulses

If you decide to discard the soaking water, rinse the beans and then add water in the ratio of one part beans to three of water. If you cook them in the soaking water, top it up to just cover the beans. Bring to the boil with the lid off. Turn down the heat sufficiently to allow the water to simmer rapidly for 15 minutes (one hour for soya beans) with the lid off. Stir well. Turn down to low heat (or place in oven on low heat), cover and simmer slowly till cooked. Aim for most of the water to be absorbed.

When cooked, beans should retain their shape, not be mushy, unless intended to be puréed, but be easily squashed between the fingers. Do not add salt or other seasonings until the last few minutes of cooking. Salt added at the beginning of the cooking time will result in inadequately softened skins. Many people are on low-salt diets and might wish to omit it altogether, but bear in mind that the addition of a little salt will render the beans more digestible and result in less flatulence.

Whatever dish the pulses are to be used in, it is recommended you cook them first, then proceed to add other in-

gredients. The availability now of a range of precooked pulses in shrink-wrapped packaging makes their use quicker and more convenient for those who normally don't cook pulses because they never remember to soak them. Never add baking soda to speed up cooking time as it destroys the vitamins.

### Quick-Cook Method

There is, however, a 'quick' cook method if you forget about the soaking. Cover beans with water, bring to the boil. Simmer for two minutes. Leave to soak for two to three hours. Add two tablespoons of oil, to prevent foaming and give the beans a glossy texture – this can be done no matter what cooking method you use. Bring to the boil again, reduce heat and simmer gently, covered, till tender, or place in the oven on low heat.

### Unsoaked

To cook beans that don't require soaking, wash them well, add four parts water to one of beans and proceed as above. Red lentils and split peas are often cooked to a purée and made into burgers, patties or croquettes. Add two parts water to one of lentils and cook till soft – the water should be absorbed. These can be seasoned during cooking if desired.

Brown, grey, green and whole lentils will not cook to a purée but will soften quickly. Use two parts water to one of lentils, season, bring to the boil and simmer gently for about an hour. All liquid should be absorbed and the lentils tender.

### Cooking Time

The length of cooking time will vary not only according to the type of pulse, but also to the duration and conditions of storage. Pulses can be stored for up to a year, after which time their quality deteriorates and they should be discarded. Store in clean, dry, airtight jars, away from sunlight. Only store in clear glass jars if you intend to use them quickly.



The following cooking times are a guide only – your own experience and observations will soon tell you how long to allow. Bear in mind that it's better to overcook than to undercook as undercooked pulses can be very indigestible.

**45-60 minutes:** mung, aduki and black-eye beans, split peas, lentils – except for red lentils which might take a little less time than others.

**1 hour:** brown kidney beans.

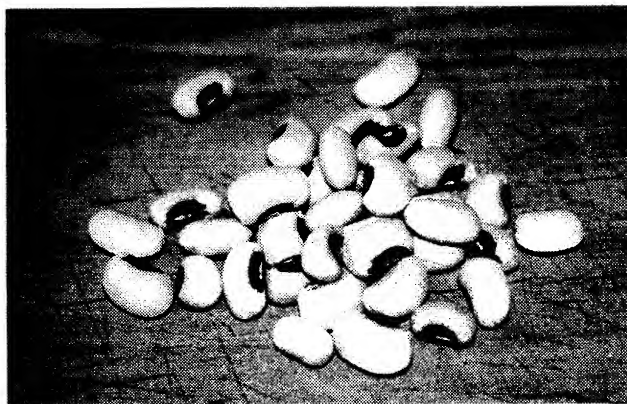
**1-1½ hours:** borlotti, pinto, lima (also known as butter), and navy (also known as haricot) beans.

**1½ - 2 hours:** pinto and red kidney beans and chickpeas.

**Soya beans** are variously shown as taking from three to five hours. It's safe to assume they need long cooking, and will probably still remain crisper than other pulses. Many people prefer to use soya mik or tofu or the range of fermented soya products, rather than the beans themselves which require such long cooking and are said to be indigestible unless correctly cooked.

#### CHICK PEA COMBO

- 1 cup cooked chickpeas, mashed
- 1 cup cooked brown rice
- 4 large tomatoes, roughly chopped
- 1 cup rolled oats
- 2 cloves garlic, finely diced
- ½ tsp cumin
- ½ tsp coriander
- 2 tbsp soya sauce
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 lge onion, finely chopped
- 1 tsp dried basil



Sauté onion, garlic, basil and spices in the oil over moderate heat till onion is soft, stirring continuously. Combine with remaining ingredients. Pour into oiled loaf tin and bake 30-45 minutes in moderate oven. Serve with your favourite sauce or relish, or vegetarian gravy if desired.

#### VEGETARIAN GRAVY

- 2 medium onions, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely diced
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp sugar
- 2 tbsp plain flour
- 2 cups water
- 2 tbsp soya sauce
- black pepper to taste
- ¼ tsp sea salt



Cook onions and garlic in oil till brown. Stir in sugar and flour and cook 1 minute. Add half of water, stirring to remove lumps, bring to boil till mixture thickens. Add remaining water and ingredients, stirring constantly. Return to boil and serve with vegetarian patties or loaves.

#### LENTILS IN RED WINE

This is one of those recipes that can contract or expand as desired, ingredients and exact quantities being very flexible. The ingredients are placed in layers in a long casserole dish, covered with a cheap red wine, then the mix is baked for about an hour. You may need to cover the dish with foil to prevent a dry browned top. You cannot make a mistake with this recipe, there are just de-

grees of deliciousness.

- 1 cup uncooked lentils
- cup or more of cheap red wine
- 3 onions, sliced finely
- 2 peppers, sliced finely
- ½ - 1 cup sliced mushrooms (optional)
- 1-2 sticks of finely sliced celery
- mixed herbs to taste
- 200 g feta cheese
- small onion, sliced
- ½ cup grated or sliced parmesan cheese

Cover lentils with water and cook until soft. Sauté the onions, peppers, celery, mushrooms and mixed herbs until the onion starts to brown.

Oil a long casserole dish and place layers of lentils, sautéed vegies and crumbed feta cheese until you reach the top. A little extra mixed herbs may be sprinkled on each layer. Cover with red wine, place in a hot oven until cooked. Use foil to cover the top of the lentils, removing about 15 minutes before removing from oven. Place slices of onion and parmesan cheese on top and brown lightly.



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# RECYCLING RUNS RIOT

by Roberino, Arrawarra Beach, NSW.

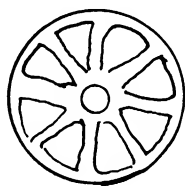
## USING LEFTOVER FLYSCREEN MESH

The mesh on screen doors always seems to get cut just where the handle is. Small kids have sharp fingernails, some people have long fingernails. Dogs will sometimes run straight through the mesh. Anyway, the outcome of all this and many other flyscreen mishaps is that I always seem to have odd-shaped bits of flyscreen mesh lying around which are too narrow or short to be used in the usual way. I know I am not alone.

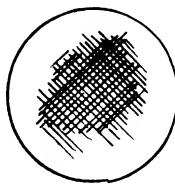
So what to do with it all? Some goes to the front of the car to protect the radiator, headlights and paintwork against flying stones. Still some left over. Think, think, think! And here's the result. I'm sure there are many more uses.

Blocked shower drain grates are a constant maintenance item due to us shedding hair when we shower.

To make the job far quicker, take a piece of old plastic flyscreen, or buy a little if you prefer. Now, using a piece of paper, mark and cut out a template of the grate and when you're happy with it transfer it to the flyscreen mesh and cut out half a dozen. Place one over the grate

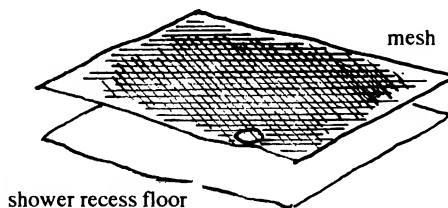
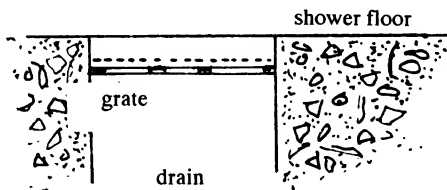


floor grate



mesh cut out

mesh filter



and put the others where you know where to find them. When it becomes obvious that the mesh filter has become fairly full, pull it off and discard it. Replace with a new mesh filter. It will save you hours each year on hands and knees pulling out hair with tweezers.

If the mesh is prone to moving you could locate it on the grate with garbage bag ties. Make sure you turn the wire ends downwards after tying.

For people who wash their hair in the handbasin this idea will also trap the hair there.

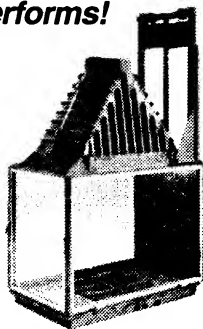
Should there be a large hair loss situation such as rapid balding due to chemotherapy, it would be best to cut a large piece of flyscreen material, enough to cover the whole shower floor, as this can clog the drains badly and be costly to fix.

When it's full just roll up and discard it and replace with another piece. It's also a cheap way to provide a nonslip surface for your shower floor and comes in different colours. To anchor it, tie it to the grate with garbage bag ties.

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# SERICULTURE

by Bridget Mahoney, Hurstville Grove, NSW.

Last time I introduced you to my consuming interest in sericulture, in particular my project of acquainting school children with silkworm production. This article will describe how my rearing room is set up, a little about the all-important mulberry tree, and some of the amazingly various byproducts. First, however, a brief summary of the silkworm lifecycle.

## LIFECYCLE SUMMARY

The caterpillars (silkworms) hatch out from eggs in August. They eat for eight weeks (mulberry leaves), during which time they go through four instars (moultings), growing rapidly. During the last three weeks a feeding frenzy occurs and leaf gathering becomes very arduous. Fertiliser pellets (frass) fill the breeding trays and are collected every few days. The caterpillars grow to about nine centimetres long at maturity.

They then spin their silken cocoon, inside which they pupate for 15 days. Moths emerge, mate for three days, the females lay up to 500 eggs each then die.

### Expired Moths

When she folds her wings and falls asleep forlorn males will follow her to eternity. This product has a good shelflife. Feed them to pet fish or birds, or keep as bait. In silk-growing regions this is a massive byproduct for fish and poultry farms.

## SETTING UP THE REARING ROOM

No insecticides are kept in my house for fear they will affect the silkworms/moths. Rearing must be kept to the coolest section of the house. Ants will attack caterpillar excreta, rodents are attracted to mature species and the pupae inside cocoons. Keep rearing trays well off the ground.

In a one-car garage I position trestles of ironing boards, mesh flyscreen doors and old metal beds on top for rearing benches. There must be air flow under rearing trays to prevent fermentation of frass products (droppings). All of the above is obtained from garbage at kerbside council clean-ups.

Paint trestle legs with sump oil to deter rodents, sprinkle talcum powder on

floor to deter ants. Remove flea collars or keep pets out of the rearing room.

Allow for expanded space as the caterpillars grow, overcrowding will contribute to a high mortality rate, especially during the fourth instar (moulting) – the feeding frenzy. I manage 5000 to 6000 and the season is brief and arduous. The need for space will get me off-side with family as I move the extended

colony to kitchen bench space. Schools will come to the rescue. Birds will dive bomb for those I can't feed. I also have backyard chooks which are thankful receivers. Pet shops will welcome them.

## THE MULBERRY TREE

Sydney's average rainfall is adequate for the survival of mulberry trees once a root system is established. In my area



**Top:** the cocoon mass is placed in boiling water to clean.

**Bottom:** The cocoon mass is sundried after washing and the pupae shaken out.



they take three to five years to mature. The caterpillars will keep them well pruned. They border my yard and double as hedgerow, an attractive addition to the landscape as they are emerald green in spite of scorching summers. The dense canopy of our central tree offers welcome shade. Fruit fall is an essential part of ground cover along with the rapid decomposition of autumn leaf. No nutrients are required. The frass from the rearing room is an added bonus to vegetables and flowers beneath the canopy, it is nature's own carotenoids, peptides and amino acids and, believe it or not, a beverage (see *National Geographic*, Jan '84). Frass can be dried and stored as a bead or pellet substance. I collect a 20 litre container full from my colony and distribute much of this in 250 g containers to growers of exotic plants for their feedback. The results are pleasing – a little goes a long way.



Cocoons in the foreground, containers of frass (fertiliser) behind.

### SERICULTURE TO BIOMASS

Sericulture is one of the few agricultures which can be termed 'commensal': insects live as tenants not as parasites and not a sod of soil is turned. Returns to the soil are tenfold. At season's end the tree canopy will be restored during the ensuing season of summer growth. Sericulture is not a science as it is steeped in antiquity, however, silk science institutes exist to extract from its biomass herbal medicines and cosmetic oils.

After eight weeks the caterpillars will leave behind a sizable pile of macerated leaf and fermentation. This is excellent compost and ground cover of mould and fungus: it even smells like rain. The necessity to water is minimised so that sericulture is not water consumptive but circular farming. From the reeling factories (filatures), pupae – the remains of the cocoons – are trucked off to fish,

poultry and pig farms. Alternatively, where facilities exist, a valuable oil is extracted for cosmetics. Finally, it can be disguised as a morsel in chocolate coating. All of the above, as well as raw silk for the weaving mills.

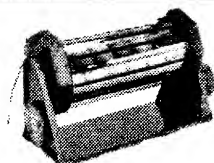
### WHITE CHRISTMAS

Before the moths eat out of their cocoons I must assess the availability of mulberry leaf for the following season. Overbreeding is an awesome event as millions will die of starvation. I keep only 200 breeding cocoons. The remaining mass is placed in a boiler of water containing a tablespoon of soap shavings and water softener, brought to the boil and simmered for half an hour. The water will be a viscose solution of disseminated sericin, the glue which coats the cocoons. Strain off and rinse them in cold water; repeat if sericin is not fully

dissolved. Sun-dry the cocoon mass. The contents of pupae will shake out when dry. I fill one pillow-sized container each season with the softest silky mass of stuffing; it is allergy-free and withstands endless washing. The most exquisite headrest known.

I have named it White Christmas for its stunning visual appearance and it is also the end product of the rearing room in late December. In copious amounts it is precious wadding for doonas because of its light weight and warmth. The sericin liquid from commercial operations is collected in exhaust tanks from degumming plants and transported to soap factories or processed to glutinous insect repellent. The mulberry tree is no idle weed. The grandeur of its canopy is my inspiration. The bombyx ivory silkmoth seems to say: 'I gave you the end of a silken thread to wind into balls of gold'.

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# THE THYMES

by Iain Harrison & John Mason, Australian Correspondence School.

The thymes are amongst the loveliest of the plants commonly cultivated in herb and cottage gardens and also make excellent rockery plants. They are generally prostrate or low growing, mat-forming plants to miniature shrubs with upright bushy habits. They have small leaves and tiny flower spikes that create a mass of colour when in full bloom, which is normally spring to summer.

### CULTIVATION

Thymes can be grown by seeds, cuttings and division. Seeds are usually sown in spring in a light, well drained soil with only a light covering. They can be sown directly into their final position and thinned as required. They usually need lots of room to spread. They also strike readily from cuttings (in the warmer months) which can be taken from side slips or the terminal parts of stems. Self-layering often occurs, and the new plantlets can be separated and planted out into new positions. Old root clumps can also be divided into small sections in early spring.

Thymes generally prefer well limed, light, dry, stony soils, but can also be cultivated in heavier soils where they tend to be less aromatic. They dislike excess moisture. Fertiliser requirements are minimal. Thymes can be pruned fairly hard to harvest flowers and leaves, to shape or control growth or to promote new growth. Pests and diseases are rarely a problem.

### SOME THYME VARIETIES

*Thymus caespitosus*: This is a prostrate mat-forming shrub with erect hairy flower stems and purplish to pink and white flowers. Leaves are found in dense tufts and are about one centimetre long and linear or slightly rounded in shape.

*Thymus camphorates*: This is a small shrub 10 to 25 centimetres high with small triangular to oval shaped leaves about two to four millimetres long. Flowers are found on small erect stems and are about one centimetre long and are purplish to rose in colour. It has a fragrance very similar to the commonly

grown garden thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*).

*Thymus citriodorus*: This is a cross, bred from *T. pulegioides* and *T. vulgaris*. It is a many-branched small erect shrub up to thirty centimetres high with narrow rounded to lance-like leaves up to one centimetre long. Flowers are generally pale lilac. This plant is popular for its strong lemon scent.

*Thymus herba-barona* (caraway thyme): This is a small low lying shrub about ten centimetres tall with rounded lance-like leaves up to six millimetres long and rose coloured flowers. The foliage has a caraway scent when crushed.

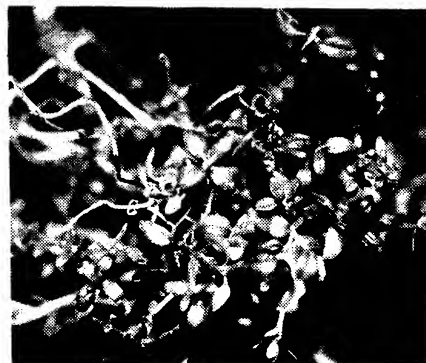
*Thymus pulegioides*: This is a spreading, bushy shrub from 8 to 25 centimetres tall with rounded to lance-like leaves about six centimetres long. Flowers are generally mauve but can be white or crimson.

*Thymus seryupllum*: A low growing mat-forming plant which self layers. Flowers stand upright on stems to a height of about eight centimetres and are usually purple in colour. *T. seryupllum* has a generally less pungent fragrance than most thymes.

*Thymus vulgaris* (garden thyme or common thyme): This is the most commonly grown thyme. It has a woody fibrous root system, numerous round, woody branches and grows to about thirty centimetres high. The leaves are narrow and elliptical in shape and about three to nine millimetres long. The flowers are found in spirally arranged bunches at the ends of the stems and are usually lilac to white in colour. It is important to note that many thyme varieties available are incorrectly named so it is important to check carefully before buying plants if you are trying to obtain new varieties for your collection.

### USES

Thymes generally have strong aromatic oils in their leaves, stems and flowers that have a pungent spicy taste and fragrance, which are retained when the herb parts are dried carefully. These leaves can be added to roasts, grilled meals and poultry, used in salads, cheese



dishes and dressings, while the oils can be used in soaps and perfumes and the leaves and flowers in potpourri and herb pillows.

Thyme extracts are also commonly used in reducing throat and bronchial complaints, for controlling flatulence and colic, for promoting perspiration in the early stages of colds, and the oil can be used as an antiseptic for cuts and skin complaints. A thyme infusion can be prepared by adding 60 grams of dried herb to a litre of boiling water which is then allowed to cool and is sweetened with sugar or honey and used at the rate of one or more tablespoons, several times a day, or it can be diluted according to taste and used as a herbal tea or mouthwash.

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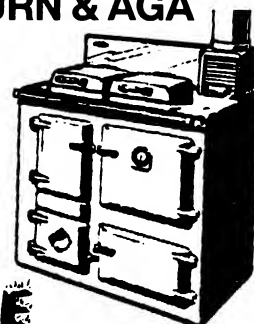
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# QUICK SHELTER FOR GOATS & SHEEP

by W & J Lankhorst, Delegate, NSW.

About a quarter-century ago we decided to acquire fifty goats to eat our blackberries, thistles, ragwort, and other species regarded as weeds, such as mullein, and stinging nettles. Indeed, the goats proved splendid weedkillers. Some of the blackberries grew to over four metres in height, most were over our heads. We burnt the worst of these clumps and the goats took care of the regrowth.

Even the spiky saffron thistle disappeared without a trace. This weed appeared in a few broad sweeps, reminiscent of the cast of hand-sown seeds, a year or so after we were informed by our neighbour that we had 'saffron thistle on the place'.

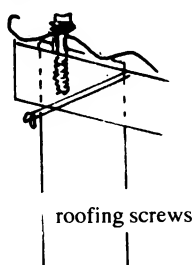
## AN INGENUOUS CONSTRUCTION – OLD TIMER'S SHEEP SHELTERS

Since our willing weedkillers and their kids needed shelter from the winter rains and snows, we needed some quick goat and sheep shelters. We had seen an ingenious and simple construction of an old-timer's sheep sheds on a farm in the Delegate River settlement on the border of Victoria and NSW. The sheds were in a sheltered spot which is why they were still intact after having been there for over 50 years. The 1940s had some heavy snow falls on the Monaro.

### Roofing Nails Versus Roofing Screws

The reason we mention this shelter factor, is that our land receives some formidable high winds, and our neighbour who decided to build sheep shelters, but used roofing nails, found his sheep shelters demolished after only one stormy night. Our sheds (touch wood) have so far withstood the elements for these 25 years. We credit this to our use of roofing screws (see fig 1), 8-gauge wire ties and metre deep post holes.

Figure 1



Snowy conditions make shelter for the goats a priority.

Figure 2a

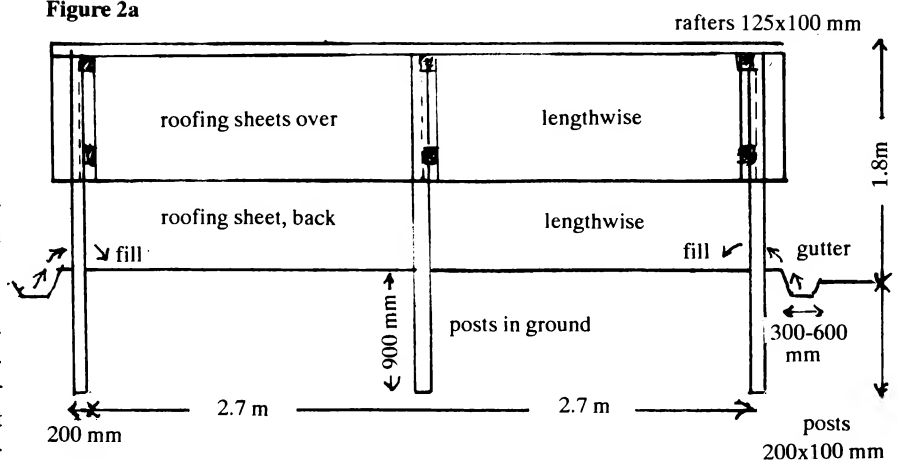
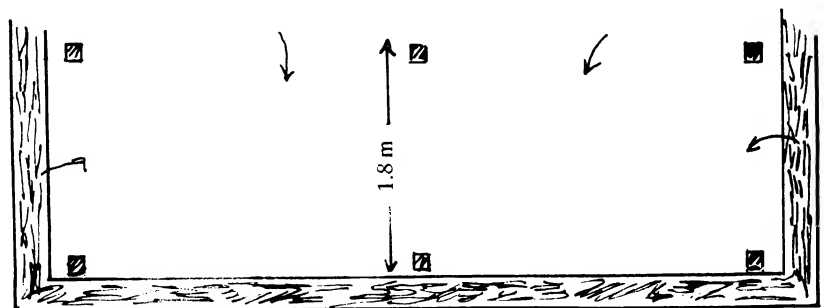


Figure 2



gutter all around 15 cm deep



## Materials

For a 6x2.5 metre module you need:

- 6 of 200x100 mm posts, 2.7 m long
  - 3 of 125x100 mm rafters, 2.7 m long
  - 5 sheets galvanised corrugated iron, 6 m long
- or
- 10 sheets galvanised corrugated iron 3 m long

## CONSTRUCTION

An important feature of the shed is the gutter (shallow trench) right around the shed, to drain water away (see fig 2 and 2a). We also elevated the floor of the shed a few centimetres, for good measure. The depth of the gutter is about 15 - 20 cm and it's 30 cm wide.

The fill from the gutter was spread on the floor, sloping into the gutters all round. We have noted that this is important in keeping the floor dry and the feet of the sheep and goats healthy.

### Shelter And Wind Deflection

Four sheets of galvanised iron cover the roof, and one sheet covers the back. The back is to the west where the major problem winds come from. Shelter is provided by 60 acres of treed slope to the north and to the east. A sugarloaf hill to the south and south-west turns the site into what the locals call a 'warm corner'. It's the west-erlies and north-westerlies that cause worries - you hear them coming with the sound of a hundred semitrailers approaching at 100 to 180 kilometres per hour. Our cabin used to shake with the onslaughts, until the black willows (*Salix nigra*) grew and protected us. Initially they grew at the rate of two metres per year. They are now some eighteen metres in height. Bat willows (for the manufacture of cricket bats) are a similar tree, straight and tall. They are easily grown from cuttings.

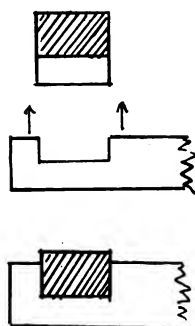
Our new house is sited under a steep hill to the south of us which tends to lift the winds over it; we discovered this principle after the house was built.

### Face The East

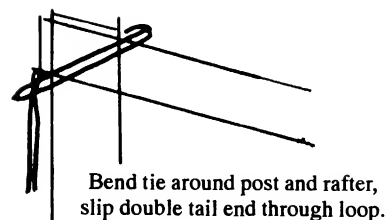
The goat and sheep shelter sheds face the east. Our neighbour chose to face them to the north on top of a ridge, without the shelter of trees. This may have been a contributing factor in the destruction of his sheep sheds. Constructions sited to catch the fierce northerlies are

Figure 3

join rafter to post



8-gauge fencing wire tie



Bend tie around post and rafter, slip double tail end through loop.

Insert spike into loop and, holding onto tail, twist loop around tail until tie is tight.

Avoid overtightening and breaking the wire.

Bend the ends of tail around to avoid injuries or getting hooked.

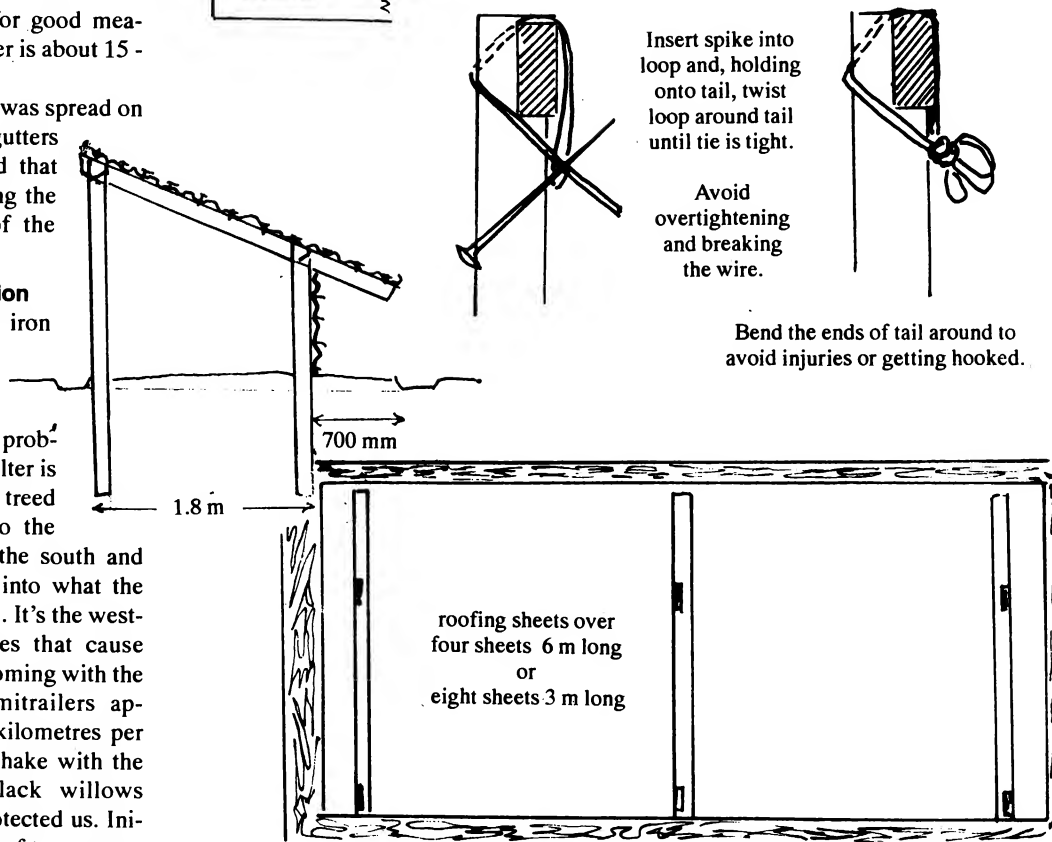


Figure 4

tempting the elements.

### Unorthodox Orientation Of Corrugations

We needed to build these shelters as winter was approaching fast. That winter we had a 45 cm snowfall. We noted that because of the steep angle of the roof of the shelter, we could make use of the rigidity which corrugations impart to the sheet to span 2.7 metres (see fig 2a). This span has proven quite satisfactory in this location for some 25 years.

### Posts and Rafters

We actually split the posts and the rafters out of white stringy barks, since then we have learned the technique of ripping posts using a 'ripping' (skiptooth) chain. This method, after a little (cautious) trial, can give very nice and accurate results. The simple joints were also cut with a light chainsaw.

It is recommended that the post and rafter assemblies are placed at 1.2 - 1.5 metre centres, but we were in a dreadful hurry to provide 80 metres of roof space

for 100 goats and kids. Snow was being forecast.

We would have preferred to lay battens across the rafters. Each batten would have had to be tied to the rafter because of the wind factor. As it is the site has a slight slope to the south and water will run off along the corrugations, but most of it cascades down the steep pitch of the roof. Some prefer to encase the posts in concrete in the ground and to creosote the posts as well.

#### Joining Rafter To Post

Speed was of the essence. Without a power drill the prospect of drilling holes with a brace and bit did not appeal. Anyway why weaken the joint, when the 8-gauge fencing wire tie has proved itself over two and a half decades? Earlier we had tried hexagon head screws, 10 mm diameter. These often split the timber, and would snap with unpredictable frequency. While these hex-head screws may work well if you first drill an under-sized hole, we had no power and no power tools available.

Hooray then, for the old 'farmer's friend' – soft 8-gauge wire – it saved the day! (See fig 3.)

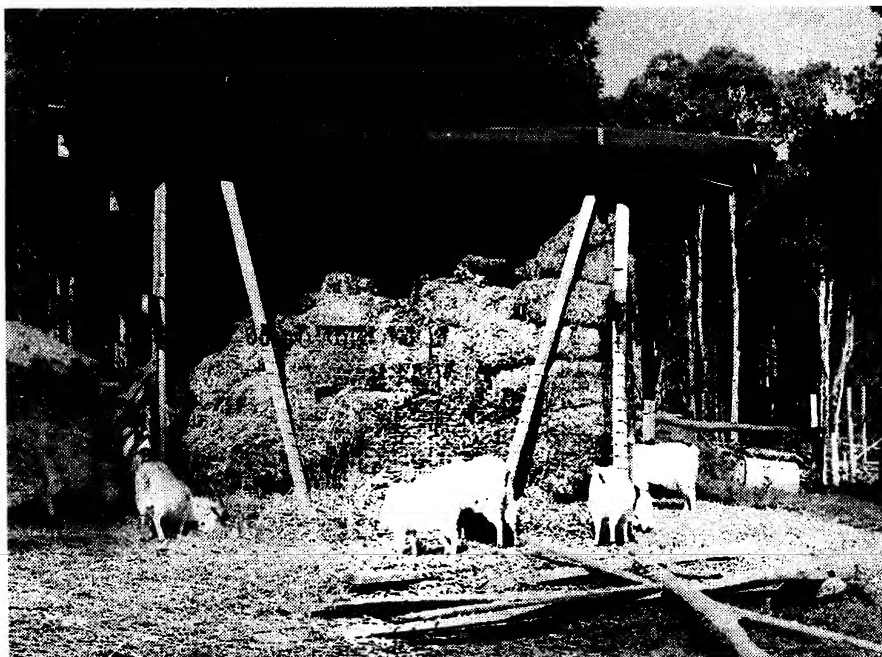
#### An Overhang At The Back

Having experienced these local high wind speeds, we decided to bring the roof down as close to the ground as possible, to maximize the deflection of the wind gusts. (See fig 4.)

An added benefit emerged. Some goats are bullies, and the 'little tunnel' at the back allowed timid and young goats to find shelter, as they were being denied shelter with those in the front part of the shed.

#### THE SHEDS PAY DIVIDENDS

Despite the drought, we have received a little rain these last years, but the goats hate even the least bit of it. The long



Some of the flock trying to crib some extra tucker from the wired-in hay shed.

spell of dry weather has caused the sheds to be used infrequently. The exception are the large wethers who use the sheds as their 'club room'. In our weaker and imaginative moments, in our mind's eye, we see the wethers lounging comfortably, smoking cigars and idly watching the swirl of the cognac inside their balloon glasses.

At the slightest provocation of a few drops of rain, the goats will run for shelter, and destroy the peace and contentment of the wethers' club room.

Every year we cart trailer loads of goat manure out of the sheds. This year we grew a lovely patch of potatoes, by means of the no-dig goat manure method. We laid the potatoes with 30 cm long shoots in rows, 60 cm apart, on the grass, and covered them over with goat manure.

To hill the potatoes, we tipped some

more goat manure on either side of the rows. To 'dig' the potatoes, we move the manure aside with a 23 cm hoe. The manure is now the consistency of light friable compost, and the potatoes are uncovered using the minimum of effort.

Growing vegetables is also made easy by this no-dig method. Placing two long boards 23 cm deep and two boards cut to 1.5 m lengths between the two longer boards, we filled the rectangle thus formed with the goat manure taken out of the sheds. The boards are kept upright by 25 cm bridge spikes, hammered halfway into the ground. We sprinkled some limestone powder over the surface of the bed.

While making the life of our goats more comfortable, the shelters pay us handsome dividends and the goats save us a lot of hard work and dangerous spraying of herbicides!

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# THE MARTINS REVISITED

by Grace Martin, Trangie, NSW.

Thought I would drop you a line to let you know where I am and what I've been up to. I wrote in your *Bumper Book* and bits and pieces of knitting, and Life At The Martins at Warren NSW – about our daughter leaving home (running away), and hopes and joys.

Now Bruce and I live at Trangie, NSW. Bruce, after 40 years on stations around Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, had to give up work as he became ill about three years ago. His doctor felt it was from all the chemicals used in the workforce with sheep and cattle, but of course you can't prove it against chemical companies. He never drank or smoked, but now has emphysema, weak mitral valve in his heart, low immune system (we have to be very careful about mixing in public as he picks up anything), trouble with reflux, gets an infection any time. So that's Bruce. He is now on a disability pension.

I keep well, we eat very simply and are better for it. We have lived here in Trangie for eleven years. We managed to buy four acres here in town. We bought an old house in Narromine and it was shifted to our block. We have worked very hard to make the little house livable and now it is lovely. I have trees and a garden and have made the back area into a 'park', all from bare ground. It's very, very hot and dry here through the summer. We do have the water on, but have to pay for every drop so mulch is everywhere – everything is raked up and put back on the garden.

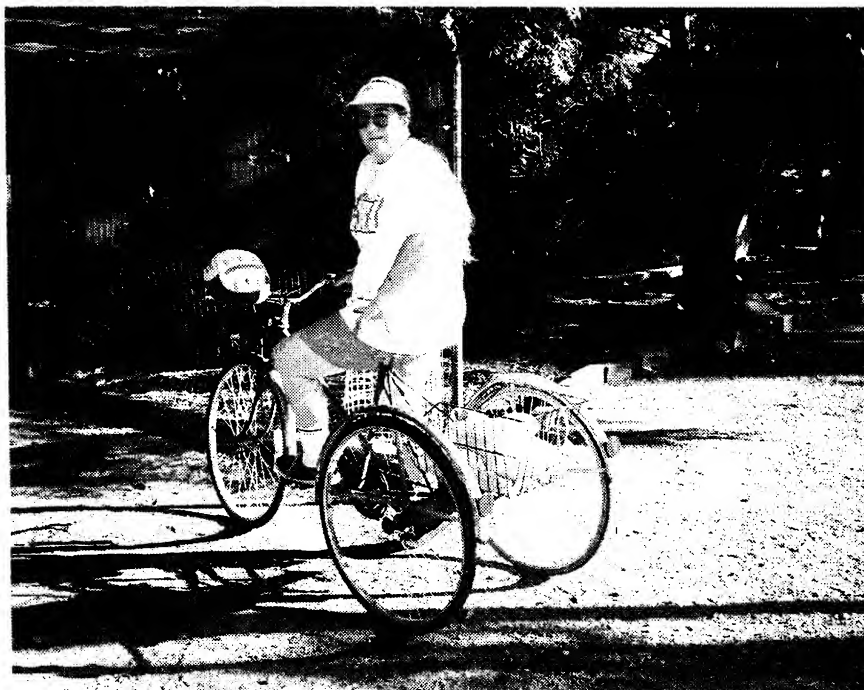
I do voluntary work among the elderly, have for the eleven years, and this year on Australia Day I was awarded the Citizen of the Year 1998 for Trangie. Quite an honour, and totally unexpected as I just like to help where I can. I am Secretary of the Pensioners' Association here too, so keep busy.

Our son, Lynnton, rang from Queensland a few years ago and asked if he and his wife, Diane, could have our second block beside us, two acres. So we agreed and now we only have two acres to look after. They put a house on their block



Above: Bruce Martin with some of the beautiful crafted boxes he makes.

Below: Grace Martin set to go on her economical and environmentally friendly pedal power.



and now live there. Bernice, our lovely eldest daughter who gave us a lot of worry, returned home after marrying the fellow she went away with and having a son. She now lives in Orange with her son, Colin, daughter, Danielle, and husband, Steven. Jillian, our youngest, is married and living in Warren with two children and husband, Russell. So we have six grandchildren all around us. Life really has treated us well. Jillian is wonderful to us.

Bruce does woodwork, makes jewellery boxes and all sorts. We don't have a vehicle any more, too costly on the pension, so we go on the bus when necessary. I ride a three-wheeled bike around town.

We have our troubles here of course, but on the whole it's a good place to live.

I still knit (trauma teddies), and I write to people I have met through *Grass Roots*. We don't have all the animals we used to have, although I have Silkie hens and roosters and our dogs.

I feed all the wild birds here and we have lots of different birds come into the garden. When it is hot I put a sprinkler on for them.

We have a lot of friends who are gardeners and we are always swapping plants and ideas. We grow saltbush here along our boundaries for fire prevention and also to stop the dust from the road. Each autumn we have been putting in about 50 plants, now have finished and the youngest lot are on the move; it won't be long before they will be big bushes. We have snakes, frogs, mice, birds, lizards, bugs and beetles etc here in our garden.

Still enjoy reading about you all. God bless and thank you for all the years of wonderful reading and please continue.



# THINK SAFETY

by June Connelly, Launching Place, Vic.

'An old dog for a hard road' is one of my mother's favourite sayings. It's an Australian saying meaning as we get older, we get wiser. Now as I am getting older it is ringing true. As a DIYer, it is easy to get injured, bruised, cut, or strain your back. I no longer bounce back from injury so quickly, and cannot afford to take time off work, or lose that precious time, as there are always a dozen tasks waiting to be done. So my favourite saying has become, 'think safety'.

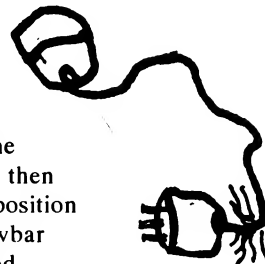
To lift heavy sacks, tip the wheel barrow on its side, slide sack onto the side of the wheelbarrow. Push on the top side with both hands and the wheelbarrow rights itself easily. Wheel to site and tip wheelbarrow to unload.

When using a ladder, check and double check again that it's stable. It takes a bit longer but it's time well spent. Even tie it in place if you are unsure.

When using as electric lead, it's so easy to give your drill, chainsaw or other tool a yank and suddenly find the lead is near your tool, and a potentially dangerous situation is at hand. So constantly think safety, particularly if near water or damp lawns.

To shift large volcanic rocks recently, my bag trolley

made short work of the job. Some large rocks had to be tied on to the trolley and then levered into position with a crowbar when unloaded.



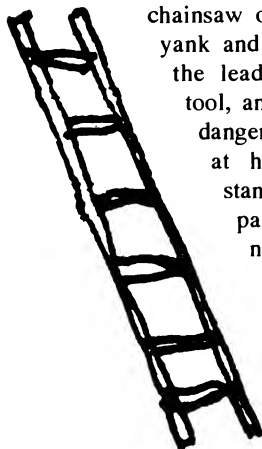
If your shoes slip on grass, gravel, tiles etc, scrunch your toes up in your shoes; this should prevent a nasty fall. Be eagle-eyed about moss and autumn leaves on your paths, as it can become a 'skating rink' on a wet day.

As I walk round the garden I constantly check for hazards: garden tools left lying around, rubbish, slippery things, worn door mats, low branches, twigs that could stick in your eye, protruding nails in old wood or even in your sheds, house or cubby.

Wire in fences that has just been cut off without the ends being bent back in a tiny loop is something people rarely think about. My father always did bend wire in a tiny loop with pliers, even on a farm fence, as it not only is a safety concern for humans, but more importantly, for your valuable animals.

Update your tetanus shots and keep an adequate first-aid kit; especially for gardeners who hate wearing outdoor gloves, as I do.

'Bid time return,' is a wishful saying, often too late. Please don't say, 'if only', or other familiar maxim after you, your children, or a visitor has been hurt at your house.



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# TROPICAL SAND

by Zig Madycki, Jabiru, NT.

I sometimes wonder whether some periods of my life aren't written up in some profound volume of the Universe, a great font of wisdom of the ages, on how things shouldn't be done. Here is one such period which left its mark before I managed to become a little more clever. It relates to sand, one of this planet's commonest compounds: silicon dioxide pure and simple.

In a temperate climate I'd tried gardening in sandy soil with lots of success. Left to nature for many years, plants had grown, seeded, fallen, rotted and regrown. I continued this organic cycle, bringing in untold amounts of vegetable matter. Weeds weren't a worry. What they 'pinched' from the vegetables eventually returned to the soil as compost. Meanwhile, they sponged up excess nutrients which otherwise may have been leached away, a reasonable balance.

My garden later became the envy of other practitioners who firmly believed successful gardening was a matter of sufficient NPK plus a few other odds and ends bought packaged from any garden store. Initially, they had scoffed as I brought in bags of leaves, grass, etc, laughingly saying that I should be raking and burning it, not bringing it in and making my place look untidy. Over a couple of years I watched their black sandy 'NPK-ed' soil turn into off-white sand, and my own untidy black sandy soil turn into what looked like 'untidy' compost. My drawback was being out bush and relying on tank water and a seasonal creek. Otherwise, seaweed, mangrove leaves, washed-up dead jelly fish, garden refuse, ash from the stove, and the contents of the toilet pan never made it to the ocean, except if leached via compost heap and garden.

Later, I again became involved with sand, but in the tropics, a long way from the coast, in sandstone country and with a solar powered water supply. The starting point was during the build-up season, affectionately known as the 'silly' or 'mango' season. Of course in the old days November was also called 'suicide month'. Whatever the expression, it was



Hard-won knowledge of specific conditions and plant requirements is required for successful gardening in tropical sand.

the hot time. Some gardens were started off by digging trenches and filling them with ash, vegetation, whatever was lying around, and the original topsoil. A no-dig garden of sorts but, an elevated garden drying out too quickly in the hot climate, having to be put underground. I planted a large variety of crops and waited.

It was at this stage that I learnt that tropical sandy soil was great for digging, great for drainage, end of story! So what was wrong? Basically the climate, the fact that soils and plants respond differently in a tropical climate than they do in a temperate one. Plus, I suppose, there were a few other factors which contributed to the difficulties. Having almost blind faith in the benefits of sandy soil made it difficult for the realisation to sink in. There is no such thing as a typical tropical climate, only what people would like to imagine is so. Generally, a tropical climate does mean things such as elevated temperatures with reduced variation, periods of heavy rain, long periods of no rain, neither very short nor very long days, and higher solar radiation most of the year. The main seasonal

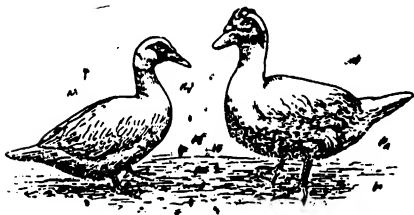
variations become the rainy time and the dry time, although in some places these are very imbalanced, and there are also the transitional periods.

As the silly season sun blazed down on my struggling plants I began to place leafy branches over them for shade. Looked strange but it helped. Growth slowed incredibly. Another factor in understanding plant growth – optimum temperature range for plants can be critical when you are near the extremes. Things like your average garden peas, broad beans and Brussels sprouts have an optimum temperature range up to about 20°C. Above that they usually shut down photosynthesis and wait. Here, although that temperature can occur, it's virtually only of a night. You can't get much photosynthesis then. Most 'regular vegetables' cut out below 30°C meaning that other than the first couple of hours in the morning and an hour or so late afternoon these plants are dormant, awaiting better times. Of course, from November to March even minimum temperatures rarely drop below 25°C.



This is where plants suited to tropics get separated from those not. I had a New Guinea bean plant which stayed about 30 centimetres long for about four months and finally withered after realising things weren't going to get better. Chokoes didn't even reach that height. Tomatoes get a mass of flowers, but no fruit. Gourds, rockmelons, cucumbers stop producing firstly female, then male flowers as temperature rises. Beware the seed packets showing a map of Australia indicating sowing in summer in southern parts, spring to autumn in the middle parts, and any time of year in northern parts. There are many so-called planting guides for the tropics at which you have to have a bit of a chuckle.

Pigeon peas did quite well, as did peanuts. In fact, during the hottest weather, peanuts just rocketed up faster than grasshoppers could chew them down, but didn't produce too well. The grasshopper food range was enormous, including mango and pawpaw leaves, coconut fronds. Some of the most unlikely tough eating material eroded away by the surge of insectivorous jaws. They didn't seem to like cucurbits. Or maybe they had a pact with the caterpillars that were decimating those.



In the dry season insect pests are notably sparse. As soon as the silly season begins they start to emerge and breed rapidly. So do many local birds, consuming masses of insects. However, insects literally overwhelm predators and descend on the plant life which has also erupted into life with the coming of the first storms. It's a very dynamic time. Cultivated plant varieties, being generally more tender, become first in line for the 'pests'. I initially got Muscovy ducks, by opportunity rather than design. They soon tired of grasshoppers and occupied themselves with helping me harvest the garden. In desperation I took to 'spotlighting' grasshoppers at night with a torch, also before first light. Subsequently, I managed to acquire guinea fowl, resulting in a dramatic grasshopper population collapse.

Average annual maximum tempera-



ture here is about 33°C, average minimum about 22°C. The biggest problems boil down to moisture and nutrient retention. Shading can be advantageous in some circumstances but you must be careful. It can make some plants spindly and unproductive. The best season for growing the usual southern 'summer crops' is during the cooler dry season months. Perhaps the worst time for growing these is the silly season, October to December. January to April is for those plants that don't mind being battered by torrential rain, aren't mildew susceptible and whose pollination won't be affected by being too soggy. However, lengthy overcast periods can be followed by sudden clear skies with a tropical sun of flame thrower intensity. This can knock plants considerably. May to September is quite good for many of those vegetables normally seen in supermarkets, provided you have sufficient water.

Under the surface of the ground is another dire story. The high temperatures mean that microbial life progresses at a hectic pace while there's moisture. Watering the garden means watering the microbes, in turn causing rapid breakdown of organic matter and rapid mineralisation of necessary elements. Watering sandy soil additionally means nutrients are taken rapidly below the root zone and plants are in no time stressed for moisture and lacking in a decent feed. It's a 'Catch 22' situation. The end result is that soil becomes more acidified and elements such as aluminium and manganese begin to show toxic effects on plants. In temperate climates the microbial activity is substantially slower and leaching a lot less.

Although pawpaws were a disaster, pineapples turned in a good crop. I had already noticed telltale signs of soil acidity from various plant responses. (Laboratory tests subsequently showed the soil to be pH 5.3) Pawpaws and pineapples are like the proverbial red and blue litmus paper. Acid soils become impoverished and plants grown in them become unhealthy with no resistance to pests or diseases. Dolomite brought a lot of improvement, but the soil would retain neither moisture nor nutrients. There were

no worms and any vegetable matter for compost was mainly from plants evolved in a deficient environment, tending mainly to attract termites.

Other difficulties abounded. Tropical days are shorter in summer and longer in winter than they are down south. This can cause unusual responses in plants which often depend on day length, in combination with other factors, to let them know what they should be doing. Coupled with a shortage of soil nutrients, a shorter than anticipated day length can signal a plant to go to seed and die off, despite adequate temperatures. They might produce flowers, seeds or tubers without really being ready, resulting in crop failure. I did manage a potato the size of a large marble out of the few surviving plants. Many plants just aren't worth trying.

So, how did it turn out? Stupidity coupled with serendipity can only get you so far in life. Eventually, you have to start getting clever. So I cheated! I dug out pits in the ground. Brought in loads of silty (moisture retaining!) loam from the river flats. Dug in more vegetation and ash. Tracked down plant types and varieties suited to the environment. Produced corn two metres high, masses of snake beans, got swamped with winged beans, okra pushing towards the two-metre mark, huge zucchinis, cassava laid on, etc. I'm not battling with sand any more. Who'd be silly enough to try growing something in tropical sand?

People experienced in gardening both tropical and temperate climates will be aware of the tremendous differences. Like many others I consulted publications. Shelves are filled with books written by people who wax lyrical about tropical gardening. It's doubtful some have ever been to the tropics. Publishing doesn't confer authority, nor authenticity, it just makes money – hopefully. So, the first important lesson to be learnt is to throw out any 'tropical gardening' books not originating in the actual tropics. Make contact with your local agricultural department office. Find local people likely to be able to help. Many Asian migrants have come from tropical areas and are often quite helpful.

Well, all in all it's probably just as well that nobody told me beforehand. I tend to be a bit of a stubborn old buzzard and have to find out everything for myself. But try stopping me from telling someone else! Tropical sand? Marvellous for digging and for drainage!

# BIODYNAMIC AGRICULTURE

## A FARMER'S PERSPECTIVE

by Deb Cantrill, Heathfield, SA.

Biodynamics is not an entirely new approach to agriculture. It is merely another development in the continuing saga of people's relationship with the soil. The biodynamic approach does not attempt to replace current knowledge, merely to add to it. Biodynamic agriculture is concerned with producing quality food in a reasonable quantity. The methods are designed to biologically activate life in plants and soil. Farmers need to develop skills to nurture the soil.

To me, biodynamic agriculture is the craft of farming, with farmers being skilled, in-tune craftspeople. I liken them to a skilled cabinet maker, using quality wood to make a fine table that will last many generations, compared with a mass-produced factory table made from chipboard and staples – made to a price by machines, just like the products of factory farming. Do these products last or sustain?

As craftspeople, the main thing in agriculture we are dealing with is life. Life is the key to existence on this planet. Many farmers, and also city gardeners, go out in the morning, not with the concept of life but with the concept of death. They go out to get rid of things. In order to grow a certain crop, everything else is killed (listen to the gardening programmes).

As a BD farmer I'm always being asked, 'But how do you get rid of a...?'

Because life cannot be captured and put under a microscope it is not understood. You have to become conscious of life before you become aware of how important it is. We have to learn how to experience this.

Biodynamics is connecting this life (bio) with the inter-relatedness of the whole system (dynamics) – a bit like group dynamics. This interaction between all the kingdoms of nature; mineral, plant, animal, human; means that everything that is alive is dependent upon other things in a network of living organisms.

This results in a holistic approach where everything is taken into account, including the weather, the conditions in the paddock, the position of the moon

and plants, history and potentials of the land and ecosystem, its inhabitants and workers. Everything should be considered from the solid earth to the furthest edge of things, along with the needs and abilities of the farmers, including their cultural and economic needs.

Part of developing this wholeness is looking deeper into nature. This deeper awareness is based on keen observation and trusting your intuition. This leads to not letting things run their natural course, but to intensifying some of the natural processes, for example by the use of the special biodynamic preparations. Aiding nature where she is weak and using human intelligence and good will to foster positive developments. Putting one's energy into supporting the good, rather than the bad. Working with life.

We have now been here for 15 years and successfully turned a degraded 4.5 hectare blackberry infested property into a thriving bio-active system.

A weekend in February saw our farm being visited by 672 adults, plus around 150 children, as part of the Australian Open Garden scheme. This was the first time a farm was open as part of this scheme. It was obvious that the people were really enjoying the ambience of our property – sitting around taking it all in. The comments were all positive and encouraging. The gate takings were donated to the Stirling District Environment Association. The Mt Barker Waldorf School had a plant stall and Heathfield High School students ran the

tea/coffee stall. A successful day for all involved. We do it all again in November and next February for the Open Garden Scheme.

In March, I am going (have now been), along with 16 other biodynamic farmers from NSW, Qld, SA and WA, to New Zealand to study biodynamics and see a wide range of farms. We will come back as trained field advisers. This will provide a very necessary service in supplying information and advice for people wishing to convert to biodynamics.

On returning, I will be running an introduction to biodynamics workshop as part of the popular courses run at Nirvana Farm. These courses are practical based courses using the farm as an important example of how things can be done. Topics include introduction to biodynamic methods of farming and gardening, poultry management, orchard management, home vegetable production, compost, machinery choice and maintenance. We also have guided tours at various times of the year to give an overview of biodynamics/organic farming and our lifestyle.

At present (late February) the autumn crop of raspberries is just starting and the seasonal rhythm of life and work at Nirvana flows on.

For more information on the biodynamic methods contact: Biodynamic Farm & Gardening Association in Australia Inc, PO Box 54, Bellingen 2454. Ph/fax: Alan Johnstone, 02-6655-8551.



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## ROUND THE MARKET PLACE

We hope you enjoy this feature introducing new products relevant to readers' lifestyles and interests.

### ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND COFFINS

Final Indulgence are the Australian agents for the Eco-Coffin. The Eco-Coffin has been developed by people concerned with the environmental impact of the synthetic glues, laquers and preservatives involved in traditional coffin manufacture. Eco-Coffins are a cartonboard product made from recycled materials, starch-based glue and plantation grown wood fibres. Another appealing aspect to these coffins is that they can be easily personalised – painted or covered in fabric for example. Eco-Coffins are available through funeral directors or they can be purchased directly from Final Indulgence who can send them flat-packed anywhere in Australia. The cost of this unconventional product is also attractive with prices starting at \$300.

Contact: Kim Eastman or Susie Aulich Croll.  
Ph: 03-6352-3929. Fax: 03-6352- 3829.

### POWERFUL HERBAL ANTIDEPRESSANT

Anxiety-Eze are capsules which contain hypericum, commonly known as St John's wort, and another anxiety relieving herbal extract called Kava Kava. There is clinical evidence which suggests that both of these extracts reduce anxiety. In fact, a recent report in the *British Medical Journal* (Vol 313 pp243-258) is particularly supportive of St John's wort as an effective treatment for depression. That report analysed 23 clinical trials and concluded that St John's wort is as effective as, or more effective than commonly prescribed antidepressant drugs in treating mild to moderate depression. Kava Kava is a traditional ceremonial drink from the Pacific Islands that has clinical support as relieving mild anxiety and improving wellbeing. Bio Organics claim that Anxiety-Eze is the highest potency hypericum product on the market and two capsules of this supply a dose of hypericin equivalent to or greater than those used in the clinical trials. Anxiety-Eze is available in pharmacies and supermarkets and the recommended retail price is \$14.95 for 30 capsules.

Contact: Bullivant's Natural Health Products,  
PO Box 403, Virginia 4014. Ph: 07-3212-8666.



### THE RANGER MOBILE CHOOK HOUSE

'The Ranger' is an attractive mobile chook shed ideal for city-based GR readers who would like to keep a few chooks. It is available in kit form and is 2x1.3m x1m (high) when erected. It has been designed for easy assembling and cleaning and to be fox, dog and snake proof. Included in the shed are a perch, a nesting box, an egg access hatch and it will accommodate five bantams or three standard chooks (so providing you with about 18-20 eggs each week). The company offering this product is called Chooks & Vegies and they make a range of products to help you on your way to self-sufficiency in the suburbs – including the mobile chook shed, other models of chook sheds, vegie starter kits, compost centres, design and consultation services. The subheading for this company is 'Self Sufficiency with Chic'. The cost for the Ranger is \$350 for a natural finish or \$385 for a fully painted model (these prices do not include freight costs).

Contact: Fiona and Mick Reid, PO Box 1103 G,  
Greythorn Vic 3104. Ph: 03-9857-5022 or 0412-098-371.

### MOUSE TRAP

Now available on the market is a mouse trap which does not use poison. In an Ever-Set trap, food is set and left in a bait station, and when mice try to reach the food they fall through a trapdoor to a bucket below. The trapdoor, held steady by magnets, moves quickly when the mouse's weight overpowers their hold. After falling off, gravity resets the trapdoor back onto a magnetic trip mechanism, immediately ready for the next mouse. The manufacturers recommend Ever-Set traps be used on farms, around aviaries and anywhere mouse populations are a nuisance. These traps are capable of catching large numbers of mice, are permanently set and always baited, do not use poisons or chemicals, and only require emptying at regular intervals.

Available from selected outlets or by mail order  
from Helen & Ken Calder, at: Ever-Set Traps,  
RMB 2232, Maryborough 3465. Ph: 03-5462-2331.

### SOLID WATER BAGS

Solid Water Bags are not a lifetime watering system for field plants. They have been designed as a safety factor to reduce water stress during the first six months when trees and plants are establishing, particularly in extreme hot or dry conditions. They are made from an absorbent polymer (safe to use in organic farming situations) which forms a firm clear gel when immersed in water. The gel is enclosed in an envelope of plastic laminate and nonwoven fabric which is permeable to plant roots. When placed at the bottom of a planting hole, tree roots enter the bag and tap into the water supply. Each time the plant is watered, the bag reabsorbs moisture which is then available to the plant during dry periods. The makers of Solid Water Bags claim that they can reduce the need for watering by up to 75%, depending on soil conditions. Eventually the trees outgrow the need for the water bags, and become self-reliant.

Contact: P Evans, 0411-872-517, or write to:  
PO Box A897, Sydney South, 1235.

### DYNAMO FLASHLIGHT

Dynamo flashlights are imported from Russia and use technology that is 48 years old. The main advantage claimed for these flashlights is that they do not use batteries of any kind, and so are a 'clean/green' product. They are ready for operation at any moment, irrespective of weather conditions and how long they have been in storage. The components are noncorrosive and the flashlight works under water. They may be useful for emergency use around the home and in the car, and while camping or caravanning.

**Contact: Dany Van Zanten,**  
PO Box 170, Urunga 2455.  
Ph: 02-6655-6604, fax: 02-6655-5712.



### HAPPY ROSES FOR NO BLACK SPOT

Beat-a-Bug, natural garden products from Western Australia, have in their range a rose tonic to prevent and treat the dreaded black spot. It is a formula which includes ginseng, garlic, seaweed extract and a host of other natural ingredients that work to treat black spot and powdery mildew and prevent recurrence by establishing resilience. The manufacturers suggest that roses be sprayed with Happy Roses for three consecutive evenings for quick recovery of sick plants. This product is available in ready-to-use spray containers – one litre for approximately \$12 and five litres for around \$33. It is available from nurseries and other retail outlets such as Bunnings.

**Contact: Beat-A-Bug, Freecall Hotline: 1800-622-562.**

### UNUSUAL ENERGY PRODUCTS

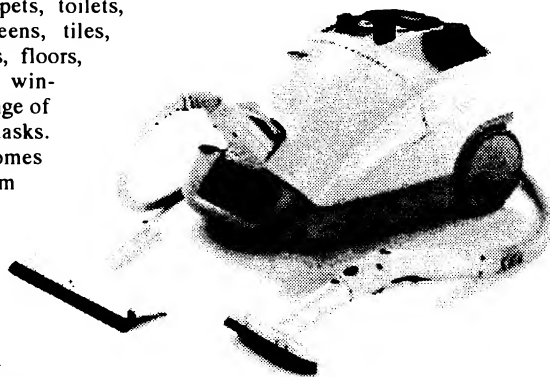
The Energy Store offers an unusual range of 'energy products' which are designed to improve upon mainstream scientific thinking by protecting, boosting or saving energy. Products include energised water packages, radiation suppressors, water filters and magnets. The products are available by mail order only. Descriptions of available products and costs are listed in catalogues.

**Contact: Tim Strachan, Megadisc Pty Ltd,** Suite 3, 81 Old South Head Rd, Bondi Junction 2022. Ph: 02-9388-8857.

### VERSATILE VAPOUR STEAMCLEANER

The Karcher Vaporapid is marketed as a domestic use vapor steamcleaner with a wide range of cleaning applications. It deep cleans and eliminates bacteria and bad odours without the use of chemicals and with a minimum of water. Tasks which can be undertaken with the use of the Vaporapid include carpets, toilets, showers, showerscreens, tiles, grouting, handbasins, floors, walls, mirrors and windows, as well as a range of smaller cleaning tasks. The Vaporapid comes with a bonus steam iron, is imported from Germany and can be handled with ease.

**Contact:**  
**Jeanette Hasthorpe**  
**of Australian Home**  
**Services on 03-5944-3945.**



### BACK PACKS & SLEEPING BAGS

Black Wolf has a range of back packs that are not only very hard wearing but also comfortable to carry and affordably priced. Ranging from 25 litre capacity and going up to 90 litres, they come with a number of different options. For example the 90 litre has a front zip-off day pack with internal mesh pocket and stationary organiser, twin compartment main sack with internal divider, removable internal laundry bag, removable internal compression system, concealed shoulder carry strap, and zippered fold-away harness cover. The shoulder strap and harness cover enable the back pack to be used as an ordinary travel bag which is very convenient when travelling by plane or bus etc.

All the larger back packs feature an ergonomic fully adjustable harness system (very comfortable) as well as a fluorescent rain cover which zips away underneath. The rain cover is also good to use when walking alongside roads as it is highly visible.

Also available is a full range of sleeping bags. For example the Samurai is suitable to use in temperatures of -5°C, has a nylon taffeta outer lining, 100% cotton inner lining and 2 layers of 200gm per sqm high loft hollow fibre with a non-woven inter lining between the two layers. At the other end of the warmth scale is the Sphinx which is suitable for 2°C and above. All Black Wolf sleeping bags have a comfort ridge curved hood, draft collar and nylon auto-lock zipper.

Prices for back packs and sleeping bags are available from retailers.

**Black Wolf products are available from camping stores such as Aussie Disposals, BBQ's Galore and Budget Camping.**

**For further information or your nearest stockist ph: 1800-227-070.**

### PASSIVE SOLAR DESIGN OF BUILDINGS - VIDEO

Narrated by Peter Holland, Candlelight Farm Permaculture.

This instructive video is aimed at people wanting to build their own energy efficient home, but the makers suggest that it would also be useful to science, architecture and building students. Consequently, teacher resource notes accompany the video. The key principles of energy efficient design such as orientation, insulation, ventilation, integration of the garden, etc are all discussed and illustrated. The video which has a running time of twenty-three minutes, includes computer animations, interviews and actual footage of passive solar houses. It is available for \$44.90 including p&p anywhere in Australia.

**Contact: Ross Mars, Candlelight Farm Permaculture. Ph/fax: 08-9295-4627.**

# NATURAL PEAR & CHERRY SLUG CONTROL

John Mount, Woodford, Qld.

*Caliroa cerasi* or the cherry slug, also known as the pear and cherry slug, is not really a slug but the larvae of the sawfly (which is not truly a fly but a wasp). This slug-like creature is a thin blackish-brown grub less than 12 mm long, sometimes covered in a dark green slime. It skeletonises cherry, pear, plum, and quince trees by feeding on the upper surface of the leaves, often leaving only a network of veins. The pupa develops into a glossy black fly-like adult 6-8 mm long with two pairs of wings. It is mainly active on the eastern seaboard of Australia, usually emerging mid-summer to autumn.

Young trees are most at risk as they can be quickly defoliated. Adult trees should not be severely affected unless they are under stress through lack of water or poor soil conditions. As a long-term control measure, encourage biodiversity. The slugs are preyed on by some species of wasps and by birds including robins, wrens and thrushes.

The grubs are easily visible and can

be removed manually or sprayed with a soap or neem spray. Other general-purpose sprays worth trying are garlic, pyrethrum, derris or quassia.

## SIMPLE SOAP SPRAY

Take 56 grams of soft soap (that soap based on potassium carbonate and usually available from chemists and health food shops, not the other which is based on sodium hydroxide or caustic soda). Dissolve the soap in 4.5 litres of hot water and allow to cool. It might be necessary to add a wetting agent or spreader such as an oil soap or white oil to the final mixture to improve the sticking quality of the spray. Spray the tree thoroughly, particularly under the leaves.

## OIL SPRAY

White oil can also be made into a spray that suffocates insects such as the sawfly and its larvae. Oil sprays also work on aphids, azalea lace bug, caterpillars, leaf miners, mealy bugs, scales, spider mites, and white flies. Oil sprays can damage

the leaves at temperatures of over about 24 degrees, which, paradoxically, is when the slugs are most likely to be active, so use them either when the tree is dormant or during a cool spell.

Horticultural white oil is a light mineral oil (liquid paraffin) but there are various recipes around for homemade equivalents. Try this simple one.

Blend in a vitamiser a cup of vegetable oil (as used for cooking), one and a half cups of water and a teaspoon of grated pure soap. Store in a sealed jar and dilute just before using, one part oil mixture to ten parts water.

## WOOD ASH

Another method suitable for use on small trees is to scatter wood ash over the leaves to make them unpalatable to the pest. It's hard to see this being a practical solution on large trees, but if done when the tree is small it could break the lifecycle sufficiently that the problem can more easily be controlled by hand in the succeeding year.

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# Recent Releases

On this page we present information about newly published books that we feel will interest readers, with details of prices and publishers. We no longer distribute books for other publishers so if you're interested in buying any of the books described here, please order them through your nearest bookstore.

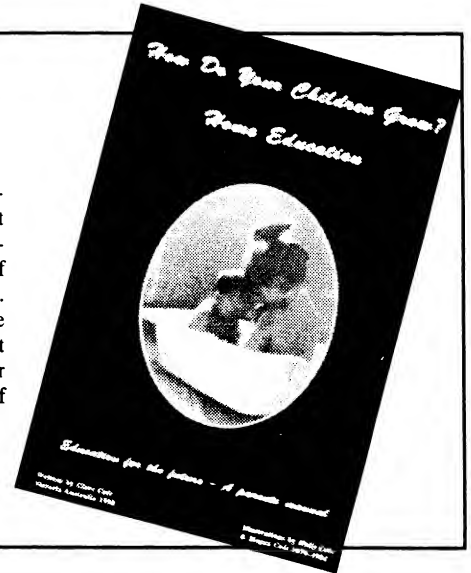
## ★ FEATURE TITLE ★

### HOW DO YOUR CHILDREN GROW? HOME EDUCATION – Clare Cole.

This is a home education parents' manual – full of all sorts of information and advice for anyone considering home schooling (and will probably inspire parents not considering it to do so). It describes the author's personal experience in setting up and participating in various home-school groups/home educating families in Melbourne from 1978 and over a span of fifteen years. Included in it are extracts from home-school journals, comments and observations and references to other alternative education proponents. A wide range of practical information that could be

invaluable to parents conducting home-based education is covered in detail – subject areas, comparisons to school practices, accessing community resources, methods of learning, dealing with fears and problems etc. Line drawings and photos accompany the text, making it an even more pleasant read. At the very least this book will get the reader thinking about the aims and philosophies of teaching our children.

P/b, 342pp, The Alternative Education Resource Group Inc. PO Box 71, Chirnside Park 3116. RRP \$30 plus \$5 p&p.



### THE FENG SHUI GARDEN – Gill Hale

Feng Shui has become more popular in the West in recent years but the garden has often been ignored. Armen Arto in the foreword to this book reminds us that if a house is going to benefit from good overall Feng Shui, the garden cannot be left out. This book looks at optimising your garden and gardening methods to Feng Shui standards and stresses that Feng Shui is about living in harmony with your own environment rather than trying to emulate surroundings that constitute good Feng Shui elsewhere. It addresses how various Feng Shui practices relate to the garden and covers design, plants, seats and statues, paths and describes some case studies. Colourful and instructive illustrations and photos help the reader grasp the concepts.

P/b, 128pp, Hodder & Stoughton. Ph: 02-9841-2800. RRP \$29.95.

### JUGGLING SORE JOINTS AND BABIES – Lisa Gibbs

This guide has been written for parents and others with arthritis and related conditions who care for babies and toddlers. It aims to help them cope with the demands involved and still be able to enjoy their time spent with young ones. The author found alternative ways of doing things after having children of her own and suffering arthritis problems. Areas covered include preparing for the arrival of the new baby, looking after baby, looking after yourself, medical issues and support services.

P/b, 64pp, Arthritis Victoria, 263-265 Kooyong Rd, Elsternwick 3185. Ph: 03-9530-0255. RRP \$12.95.

### WHAT KIND OF CHILD ARE YOU BRINGING UP?

– Kerry Frost

This book is really a practical and general guide on how to raise children to be healthy and well adjusted. It makes interesting comparisons between strong and healthy families and problem child and parenting behaviours. Strategies for 'successful' parenting are presented and discussed. So too are alternative actions to physical punishment and negative parenting. The case examples of problem situations and suggested solutions make the author's perspective and advice easy to follow and make for sound advice for positive parenting.

Pb, Raffles Editions, SNP Publishing.  
Ph: 02-9550-9207. RRP \$24.95.

### THE LITTLE BOOK OF WELLBEING – Penelope Sach

This pocket book is full of simple reminders to assist wellbeing. Many of the hints it contains most of us know are good for us, it's more a matter of remembering and taking the time to do them! A little gift perhaps for a stressed-out friend.

P/b, Penguin. Ph: 03-9871-2513. RRP \$4.95

### THE BASICS OF ANGORA BREEDING – Mavis Walledge

Angoras can be kept for stud breeding or commercial mohair production and herd size can vary greatly. This book's comments generally refer to a small breeding herd but most of the information applies to herds of any size. The book details the yearly programme for breeders, it provides an outline of monthly activities, husbandry procedures, the breeding cycle, equipment and a range of associated topics. Diagrams and colour and black and white photos accompany the text and will further help those about to embark on raising and maintaining an Angora herd.

P/b, 120pp, Kangaroo Press/Simon & Schuster.  
Ph: 02-9654-1502. RRP \$19.95.

### WHAT RISK? SCIENCE, POLITICS AND PUBLIC HEALTH

– edited by Roger Bate.

This study brings together expert research and opinion concerning the impact of low doses of certain toxins on human health, and the implications of this research for public health policy. The major conclusions of the book are that the critical factor in determining toxicity for substances such as benzene, ionizing radiation, asbestos, dioxin and others, is the dosage, and that for most toxins there is a 'threshold' under which there are no harmful effects from exposure. Writers argue that in terms of public health policy governments have been misled by faulty or biased scientific research to make policy which, although 'politically correct', may actually be against the public interest. It also examines exaggerated and distorted media coverage of environmental risks which fuels public concern. The findings are likely to challenge the readers' perceptions of what constitutes an environmental hazard, and their understanding of risk regulation.

H/b, 328pp, Butterworth-Heinemann.  
Ph: 03-9245-7111. RRP \$105.00.

# THE PINE CONE RETRIEVER

by John Mount, Woodford, Qld.

One of the oldest living things on earth is the Bristlecone pine tree, a native of the American state of California. Some specimens have been estimated at over 4500 years old.

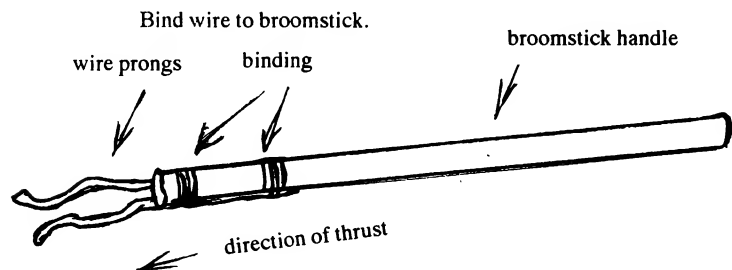
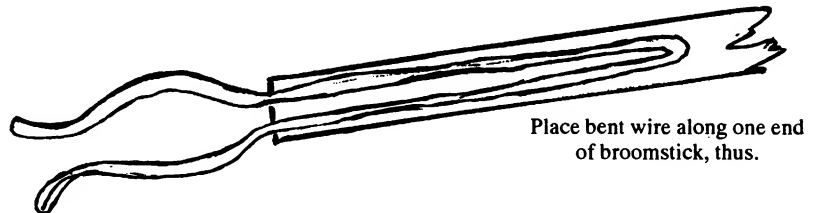
However some owners of the shorter-lived common varieties often find them a nuisance. The pine needles cover the ground and prevent plant growth, while the cones (especially the spiked type) can be quite literally a pain to pick up. Enter the pine cone picker-upper. A device borne out of sheer necessity and a desire to spare the human spine and hands much pain during the retrieval of these annoying little items.

Basically all that is needed is a length of heavy wire about 60 centimetres long and less than half a centimetre thick. The wire is bent equally in two with two opposing outward curves centered about 10 centimetres from the ends. The two ends are bent slightly outward to enable a cone of any size to pass between the prongs into the curve, or 'catching area'. The whole is then secured with a finer wire or cord to a broomstick or piece of timber of similar dimensions.

All that is needed is an old bag with a neck or shoulder strap to store the cones, and one glove to pull the cone from between the prongs of the retriever.

The cones can be used as excellent fire starters for barbecues and incinerators.

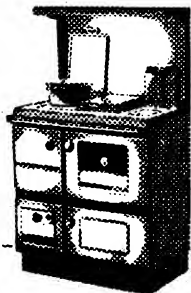
## The Pine Cone Retriever



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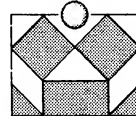
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# DOWN HOME ON THE FARM

by Megg Miller.

Many surprising incidents have occurred here over the years, but one of the most unusual must be the arrival of a lost koala this evening. As I trotted the wheelbarrow of chook feed over to the entrance of the big paddock, shrieking from a group of guineas caught my attention. The dog also noticed the commotion and leapt up to investigate, barking defensively. In the evening gloom I couldn't distinguish the particular species of the lumpy creature receiving the guineas' tongue lashing. As the beast turned to retreat it became apparent it was a koala. The poor creature seemed horribly confused and quickly turned back to cross the road and seek refuge in the trees there.

The roadside here is not a safe place for bird or animal, especially a slow moving marsupial. Cars and trucks speed by, many showing no regard for anything that gets in front of them. Hopefully this fellow has sought out the clumps of established trees growing further back in surrounding paddocks. The guineas were remarkably quick in noticing the visitor and setting off the alarm. The watch dog should be feeling rather embarrassed, they well and truly preceded her.

I hope it's not wishful thinking but I'm sure there has been the weeniest lengthening of daylight hours this last fortnight. Suddenly it's becoming easier to get most of the chook chores done before dark. It's hard in deepest winter to cram everything into the short period between end of office work and nightfall, with the result I'm often finishing off by torchlight. Jobs just don't go away because it's dark. In fact, if the evening is mild and I have time and energy, I'll clean out a chook house. It's often easier with flighty birds to do management tasks in half light, and I'm lucky to have one of those large rechargeable torches that can run for hours when necessary. The sheds missed their annual clean-out in autumn because of my preparations for going away, but they need to be done before the birds commence serious spring egg production. Can't have them laying in dirty nest boxes!

Not all evenings have been mild enough to contemplate staying out and looking for work. Mostly this winter I've been in a rush to get indoors. It has been



The guinea gang – they may look half asleep but nothing goes undetected.

bitterly cold. The mornings have been the worst, thick white frost on everything and air so crisp it forms words as you say them. For the first time ever I've resorted to using a thick woolly scarf. Either I'm getting soft or it's colder than previous years.

Arriving home in the wee hours one morning recently I noticed a goose which appeared to be carrying a covering of frost on its back. In case you're smirking, no, I don't drink, so the sight could only be caused by the machinations of travel fatigue. I checked the particular bird in the morning and it looked fine, the plumage of similar hue to the rest, but I'm sticking to my story that it's so cold here at night that even the birds become frosted over.

One weekend recently, tired of feeling cold despite gas heating, I set and lit the wood stove. As usual, it billowed smoke into the kitchen for the first hour and set off all the fire alarms, but once the red coals formed the windows could be closed and the benefits of the stove enjoyed. It was a pleasure to get up next morning in a house that wasn't bitterly cold, the chimney bricks were still holding a little heat. Friends arriving to share lunch that day were overcome by the cosiness of the kitchen – crackling fire, simmering pot of soup and inimitable smoky aroma. The bitter weather outside highlighted the pleasures of the country kitchen and we reminisced about our pasts when life was simpler and less busy and wood stoves and open fires were an everyday matter. Not surprisingly, I've lit the fire on subsequent weekends and basked in its warmth and enjoyed the real food cooked on it.

Some months back I realised I'd been

slack in keeping up with the house maintenance so I got a wish list together. I wish someone else would do it! The paint on the weatherboards at the back of the house has long been peeling off, so when I found a few dollars left over after shopping one day, a 10 litre tin of paint was duly purchased. Of course the walls had to be prepared first, the boards sanded back and holes appropriately filled. Then with a flourish, the paint tin was opened. Heavens, the contents were white and no amount of stirring could find any colour pigment. The paint shop was terribly sorry and the selected colour duly added. Again the tin was opened – this time the colour bore no resemblance to that on the rest of the house. So much for my ability to mentally 'match' colours. Back again to the paint shop, accompanied by a length of board prised off the wall for matching. The paint tin is sitting grandly on the verandah haunting me. The weather is inappropriate for painting and there is still a jasmine-covered, spider-infested section of weatherboards to be prepared. The walls look terribly dreary. Have I struck it right with the colour this time?

With outdoor painting off the list the next job in line was tackling the passage runner. The old length of carpet needed to be taken up and the cheery new roll laid down. First there was the little job of sanding back several boards on each side, this runner being substantially narrower, and sealing them. Unfortunately some of these boards still carried the tar-coloured Jap paint that was popular a number of decades ago, and had to be stripped. Out came the GR back copies in search of the paint stripper recipe (GR 92, page 67) and the mix was made up.

Several applications of this cheap but effective stripper removed the offending paint, and following a quick sanding, the boards were ready to receive the first of four layers of polyurethane coating. How do people survive this appalling job? Without thinking, I brushed on the first application after dinner one evening then went off to the office for a few hours. I nearly died of asphyxiation when I returned, and rushed around opening every door and window. In fact, I would have gone to friends for the night had it not been so late. The smell was even detectable in the bedroom, despite the closed door and opened windows, and I wondered if any brain cells would be functioning in the morning. I wised up after that and put the finish down before leaving for work. With the house wide open all day only the faintest odour remained by evening. There are some bare boards in other rooms that would benefit from a polyurethane finish, but I'll plan more sensibly next time. It was an eye-opener just how toxic-smelling this product was, even the cat was off colour for a few days. It's not surprising so many people have chemical sensitivities.

Earlier in the year two white Runner ducks were entrusted into my care by Josie, the young friend who was hoping to get into university at Bendigo. She achieved her aim, but was faced with leaving her mum to care for a horse and flock of ducks. It was decided the Runner ducks, fragile creatures due to inbreeding or insufficient nutrients prior to Josie's guardianship, would be best with me. They were to wander around my vegie garden, snaffling snails. As I hadn't organised a night enclosure, I settled them into the yard adjoining the garden where they would be safe. When they finally were put into the garden they didn't like it, and sat sulking for days up against the fence. Back they went to the adjoining yard. They thanked me with a rush of eggs, to Josie's disbelief as they had previously been poor layers. At a loss to name them, I called them One and Two. Because they were not robust, I kept them enclosed, out of reach of the romantic notions of old Monty Muscovy.

When I returned from my break back in April, the first thing I did was check out the Runners. They were not in their yard. I anxiously ran around the sheds, wondering what I would tell Josie if they had disappeared. And then I located

them, smugly sitting down next to the automatic waterer under a peppercorn tree, alongside old Monty and his mate Molly. They showed no inclination to return to their safe, boring life. Monty's ravishing days appear to be over as no telltale dirty tread marks have appeared on the Runners' backs and even Molly is pristine white. They have become a contented little group. They all wait and make forays to the dog's food when my back is turned and then scuttle under the office where I can't reach them. White shelled duck eggs regularly appear in incongruous places, courtesy of One. If the group is dissatisfied with their standard of living this same duck is desperate to admonish me. Runners are very loud! I was initially concerned they would have trouble coping with the menagerie here. What a joke! They're quite capable of nipping all but the blustering geese. When the latter won't share the feed bowl, One and Two appeal to me with a flurry of quacking. They've worked out the system here very well, thank you.

Along with the duck eggs, an increasing number of hens' eggs are appearing. Yesterday the first turkey egg for the season turned up. The geese are boisterous and keep disappearing into sheds or under bushes. Suddenly it's *that* time of year again. For a while only the Naked Necks were laying, surprising really as you would think they needed all their energy for keeping warm. Eggs are slowly turning up in most of the breeder sheds, and the cross-breeds, who are only here because I haven't managed to catch and sell them, are vainly trying to justify their existence. I have plenty of eggs now for Lucy and her family to use in homemade pasta. They swear the free range eggs from these hens are unequalled.

It's time to clean out the incubator and turn it on. Time to venture into the brooding shed and clear out last season's sins. Time as well to get a grip on reality and set just a few eggs so I'm not out all hours in the months to come moving chicks or cleaning brooder spaces. Perhaps I should rename myself Ms Just. I've just about got the sheds and birds ready for spring lay; I'm just going to set a few eggs from each breed, and keep just a few chicks on. There will just be a handful of turkeys and hens going to the Melbourne Royal this year. Sounds pretty managable, doesn't it? I've *just* got to stick to it all!

## PENPALS

Hi, my name is Olivia. I'm 13 and my interests are reading, writing, cooking, horse riding, playing touch football, watching movies, and flower arranging, and I love eating lollies. I would prefer a girl my age who is a home educated person. I am a Christian so no Taurean or Wicca people please. I will reply to every letter!

**Olivia Ireland,**

**C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**

Granny, 56 years young, divorced. I love oceans, cats and all creatures, snow, rain, flowers, Victorian High Country, solitude, open fires, people, humour. Would love to correspond with anyone, especially from north-east Vic farming people.

**'Younger Than Springtime',**

**C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**

Hi, my name is Meredith. I am looking for a penpal, any age, female. My interests are music, animals, athletics and birds. I have lots of pets and enjoy writing and reading and I am home educated.

**Meredith Ireland,**

**C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**

Hi, I'm Alicia, I'm nearly 12 and I would like a penpal the same age. I like animals and playing tennis.

**Alicia Gallagher,**

**C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**

My name's Sophie and I'm 8. I like swimming, games and collecting stamps.

**Sophie Gallagher,**

**C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**

Hi, everyone, my name is Alison and I'm almost 13. I love gymnastics and listening to music. I have 2 sisters, 1 pony, 1 horse and a dog. I'm looking for a penpal around my age from Japan, so please write soon.

**Alison McCrindle,**

**C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**

Hi, my name is Stuart. I'm 30 years old. I enjoy good movies, music, books and fun. I would like to hear from anyone, anywhere.

**Stuart M,**

**C/- PO Box 130, BLACKBUTT 4306.**



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## PROPERTY FOR SALE

### NEW SOUTH WALES

**MID NORTH COAST, MANNING.** A tranquil retreat, this grand homestead on 23 ac immediately relaxes you. Breezy Qld style, perfect ntlly aspect, 100% recycled Australian hardwood, mostly red mahogany, 15 mins to Wingham. \$220,000. Ph: 02-6550-5021.

**FAR NORTH NSW,** 115 ac ideal location, 10 mins Murwillumbah, 30 mins Gold Coast. True wilderness, ocean views, abund wildlife, palm filled gullies, diverse species (some rare), water-fall, 1 mill gals spring water. Easy access, 6x9 m shed/slab/plumbing. Reduced price \$165,000. Ph: 08-8272-6592.

**MOONAN FLAT, NEAR SCONE** – 1½ ac in sml village. Fenced, power. \$18,000. Ph: owner, 02-4283-3382.

**NORTHERN RIVERS,** 128 ac, state forest on 2 bndrys, NE Grafton. Five dams, f/trees. Home almost finished inside, s/c/stove (HWS), solar power (RAPAS standard), shed, chookhouse, r/w/tanks. Generator backup, gas fridge, ½ hr beaches. \$110,000. Ph: 02-6676-3224.

**NYMBOIDA,** 30 ha forest, 3 ac cleared, 2 b/r, mud brick house, 12V solar power & gas. Guest room, w/shop, woodshed, chook house, vegie garden, f/trees & estab gardens, lge dam. Great local community, school bus. \$130,000. Ph: 02-6649-4274.

**MANNING VALLEY HINTERLAND,** 200 secluded acres. Creek flats to undulating, 2 dams, some creek frontage, 30% cleared, 15 minutes to Wingham. \$125,000. Ph: 02-6550-5021.

**MID NORTH COAST – MOORLAND,** 16 ha of tall timber & privacy. Red volcanic soil, perm water, 6 km from Crowdy Head. 700-tree orchard – mango, exotic fruits and nuts providing self-suff, seed and budwood for wholesale grafted tree nursery. Architect designed post and beam house in superb bush location. Very profitable business, owners can instruct. Ph: 02-6556-3148.

**DEUA RIVER NATIONAL PARK,** 15 mins Moruya. River frontage, 60 ac, 8 ac managable paddocks, some r/forest, 3 b/r home, school bus, ph, solar. Offer for quick sale. Evenings, 02-4474-3091.

**BEGA VALLEY/BEMBOKA,** shop, residence, partly renovated, suit restaurant, great position. \$80,000 ONO. Ph: 03-9859-7829, or 018-356-266.

**BEAUTIFUL BUSH RETREAT, BODALLA,** south coast. Quality 22 sq mud brick home on 40 ac, 30 ac bush, 10 ac fertile cleared. Permanent crk, pure water, privacy, passive solar design, 3 large bedrooms, oregon, cedar, Tasmanian oak timbers. Huge double garage/shed. Twenty mins to h/way, school, shops, 3 mins to school bus. \$135,000 ONO. Ph: 02-4474-3513, or 02-4473-5530.

**DEUA RIVER – MORUYA,** land for sale, perfect retreat. Kangaroos, wallabies, quolls, platypus, bass, lyrebirds, old-growth forest/r/forest gullies. Ph: 02-4474-2935 AH.

**BUSH BLOCK – BANDA BANDA** via Kempsey, mid nth coast, 480 ac heavily timbered, approx 30 ac cleared, perm crk, 2 dwellings, 45 mins to Kempsey. Ideal for self-suff people looking for peace & tranquillity. \$70,000. Ph: 02-6562-4470, or 015-007-820.

**ARMIDALE, FIVE ACRES,** elevated bush block, sealed rds, elec, ph, school bus, 15 km from Armidale. Lots of trees, birds, native flora & fauna. \$55,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6775-2406.

**KOLOONA,** nth NSW, 180 ac, dwelling/machine shed, spring-fed dams, pine/hardwood, ph, school bus, views, clearings, fences, sandstone. \$45,000 ONO. Call owner: 02-6724-8575, 03-9878-6130.

**CENTRAL WEST, BLAYNEY SHIRE,** 23 ac approx, 2 b/r cottage, 20x40' Colorbond shed, chook house, vegie garden. Close to schools and town. Good water fed by spring. \$135,000. Ph: 02-6368-3593.

**GOOD-SIZED MUD BRICK** house, many extras, forced sale. Secure company title, inland from Eden, acres, absolute bargain. WIWO \$35,000. Ph: 02-4471-5854.

**NORTH COAST,** beautiful red rock, rare block overlooking park, estuary and sea, 2 b/r cottage, red mahogany floors, ample clear bore water, organic vegies, potbelly, endless potential. \$145,000 ONO. Ph/fax: 02-6649-2763.

**ARMIDALE, FIVE ACRES,** bush blocks, clean air, chemical-free land, dams, excel education facilities, school bus, sealed rds, elec, ph avail, located 15 km from city of Armidale. No building covenants, land suitable for pole house building, straw, mud or rock. Builders avail in town. Native flora & fauna are abundant. Magnificent views to the west. Supportive community. \$55,000. Ph: 02-6775-2406.

**MILTON, SOUTH COAST,** 10 ac share of 40 ac, multiple occupancy, 2 b/r house + rented dwelling, power, ph, good soil. Views to Pigeon House Mtn. \$82,000. Two other 10 ac blocks available. Ph: 02-4457-3312, or 0417-212-899.



# GRASSIFIEDS

## PROPERTY FOR SALE NEW SOUTH WALES

**MID NORTH COAST**, nursery, Moorland, 16 ha of tall timber & privacy, red volcanic soil, perm water, 6 km from Crowdy Head. Orchard: 700 trees – mango, exotic fruits and nuts providing self-suff seed and budwood for wholesale grafted tree nursery. Architect designed post & beam house in superb bush location. Very profitable family business, owners can instruct. Ph: 02-6556-3148.

**ORARA RIVER FRONTAGE**, 105 ac, 60 km Coffs Harbour, views, sandstone cliffs, wildlife, housesite, elec & ph avail, bitumen rd. Bargain at \$60,000. For more info ph: 02-6688-2016, 02-6649-3405.

**ROCKY RIVER**, 5 mins Uralla, 20 mins Armidale. Two ac (cleared) with 2 sml dwellings, sml dam, fenced house yard, power & garage. Sealed rd with school bus to Uralla & Armidale. Adjacent to TSR and Gold Field Crown reserve. \$45,000. Phone owner: 03-9754-5735 AH.

**PILLAR VALLEY** (between Grafton & Woolli/Minnie Water), sandstone block house on 100 ac, lovely bush, mtns, waterfall, perm crk, 2 dams, shed/bus, visitors' accom, 10 mins to beach. \$235,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6643-4908.

**BYRON HINTERLAND** – Whian Whian – long estab 6 share MO on 55 ac of volcanic soil. Fifth share for sale, 20 mins Lismore, 40 mins Byron. Choice of house sites & land area. Common facilities include community land, buildings, machinery and others, 2 crks, swimming hole, ag land. Rainforest, school & shops 5 mins. Expressions of interest close 30th Sept 1998. \$75,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6689-5397, 02-6689-5410.

**BLUE KNOB**, Nimbin 5 mins, 77 ac f/hold title, 2 council approved houses, both 7 yrs old, tradesman built, separate & private. Best views in valley from both houses. Two horse paddocks with perm water. Land suit grazing, orchards, nuts, coffee. Permanent spring-fed crk, 5 ac pine plantation, cattle yards, much more! Suit 2 families or live in 1 house, rent other. Partnership dissolving, must sell. \$230,000. Ph: 02-6689-1594.

**NAMBUCCA VALLEY**, NSW. Fed up with winter? Retire to the best climate in Australia. 25+ hectares, regenerating rainforest, Macadamia plantation, 5 b/r steel framed fibro house, 240V power, phone, sheds, 5 mins to supermarket and 20 mins to beach. \$200,000 ONO. Write to PO Box 73, BOWRAVILLE 2449, or ph: 02-6564-8008 for brochure.

**NSW/VIC BORDER**, midway between Sydney & Melbourne, 40 km to coast, 2 hr snowfields. Between Eden & Bombala 48 ha (120 ac). All timber, super soil, long crk bndry, masses of wildlife, very very private. Village, school etc, 20 mins. Sale fell through, we'll accept \$79,000 for now. Ph: 02-4784-1020.

**EIGHTY ACRES PRISTINE**, 2000 ft above sea level, situated 30 km NW Bombala. Well treed hills & slopes, paddock area. Chemical-free history. Creek & natural springs. Grow anything. Beaches & ski slopes 1½ hr. Nearby Delegate River – trout fishing. \$27,000. Ph: 03-9752-6063.

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GR 130 – OCTOBER 30TH

**FAR SOUTH COAST**, Bega Valley, 270 ac near Brown Mtn. Excellent water from several permanent crks, deep gravelly soils, suit tree crops, 2-3 ac gardens and shelter plantings watered by hydraulic ram, micro irrigation, demonstrated horticultural potential. Otherwise comprises quality stringbark forest with some clearing. Includes old weatherboard house, solar power, sheds. Adjoins nat pk, Brogo Wilderness, good access, 6 km - Snowy Mtns H/way, 1 hr coast, 2 hrs Canberra and snow. \$160,000. Ph: 02-6493-0342 or write: Box 158, BEMBOKA 2550.

**LOWER HUNTER**, 30 ac, secluded bush block, vicinity vineyards, 2 b/r house, 3 dams, shed. \$193,000. Ph: 02-4938-2036.

**BEECHWOOD TEN MINUTES**, 177 ac. Handy hidden valley, clean crk, swimming, accessible mtnr/views, farm 50+ yrs ago. \$124,000 DA, elec, ph, Port Macquarie area. Ph: 02-6686-8880.

**URGENT SALE – WOODBURN**, 10 ac, uncleared land, no dwellings but can be built on. Land is part of multiple occupancy 'Serendipity'. Similar block sold for \$35,000 recently. Offers. Enquiries contact: 02-9626-1256 AH.

**MID NORTH COAST**, 48 ha bush retreat, perm crk, well timbered, several home sites, 19 km to town, 40 mins to coast. Valued \$77,000 reduced to \$63,000. Ph: 02-6568-8214.

**NORTHERN RIVERS – MALLANGANEE**, 58 ac, stone & timber cottage, solar power, abundant water, 150 bearing mixed f/trees, 90 olives, sheds, vegie garden, beautiful setting. \$92,000. Ph: 02-6662-7698.

**HOUSE ON FIVE ACRES** nth NSW, 1 hr from Gold Coast. Spacious timber & rock, 2 storey 5 b/r, nth aspect, panoramic views. Large solar system, shed, carport, tanks, on well estab MO. Walk to primary school. \$93,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6684-3946.

**CANBERRA – COUNTRY MEETS CITY**, passive solar, double brick, 2 b/r house with sep office/retreat. Private, 1100 m² block opens to reserve – fabulous views of Canberra & Brindabellas. Watering system throughout garden. Ponds, rock walls, vegies, f/trees, natives. Double c/port, s/c/heater, dishwasher. Ten mins from city centre. \$155,000. Ph: 02-6241-3163.

## QUEENSLAND

**SEVENTY PRISTINE ACRES**, Border Ranges, SE Qld, 10 mins town, 2½ hrs Brisbane. Weekender with serviced access & ph. Spectacular views, surrounding nat pk & wineries. Ginseng growing conditions. Ten mins Stanthorpe. Live, work, relax. \$58,000. Ph: 07-3408-7700, 015-580-544.

**NOOSA**, 11 magical acres, minutes from shop/beaches, private, r/forest/creek, abund water, garden, room orchards/crops. Plus lovingly crafted earthbrick cottage. Unique. Investment assured, prestige area, future subdivision. Price negotiable. Ph: Tara, 07-5449-1186.

**BEAUTIFUL BUSH BLOCK**, 42 ac, undulating, bitumen rd front, power, 45 mins Bundaberg, 45 mins 1770. Heaps of potential. \$28,000. Send SAE: PO Box 8532, MT PLEASANT 4740.

**CAPE YORK**, 43 ac, f/hold, open forest, power & ph avail. Good ground water, fenced 3 sides, school bus 900 m, 16 km from Cooktown fully serviced tropical coastal small town with reef and wilderness. \$63,000 urgent sale. Ph: 07-4069-5314.

**OWNER GOING OVERSEAS**, former town market garden, Mt Perry Qld, 6475 m² with crk frontage. \$15,000 ONO. Ph or fax: 08-9185-4605. Must sell.

**AGNES WATER HINTERLAND**, 40 ac, 2 rd frontages, 2 b/r house, solar, gas fridge/stove/HWS. Established irrigated garden, perm billabongs + seasonal crks, 15 mins to beach & nat pks. \$115,000. Ph: 07-4974-9573.

**LOWOOD, BRISBANE VALLEY**, 30 ac, 2 km from town, primary & high school, 4 b/r Qld'er, complete privacy, secluded but not isolated, scrub vegetation, extensive gardens. \$169,000. Ph: 07-5426-1537.

**CENTRAL COAST QUEENSLAND**, 71 ha (175 ac), magnif views, coastline on one side, rolling hills on the other. Large shed (12x7.5x3.6m) set up as residence to take advantage of views and off-shore breezes, with power & ph. Close to nat pk/Barrier Reef. \$148,000 ONO. All reasonable offers considered/marriage breakup. Ph: 06-254-6577 after 6pm.

**LEAVE THE RAT RACE**, home & 25 ac, 19 km Gin Gin. Three y/o all elec 3 b/r home with BIFs. Very workable open plan kitchen, dining and lounge. Polished cyprus pine floors. Tiled bathroom, toilet & laundry. Norseman heating stove, 5 ceiling fans, composting toilet. High blocked front with lovely outlook from balcony over park-like grounds. Workshop under and space for 2 cars. Ramp at back giving access to well estab organic vegie garden. Three 5000 gal aquaplate tanks, 2 with r/water, one filled from dam, 2 dams with fire pump and reticulated pipelines to well estab landscaped gardens, fruit trees, flowering trees. School bus and mail delivery at gate. \$100,000 reduced from \$120,000 for quick sale. Ph: 07-4157-6596.

**RAVENSHOE**, far nth Qld, 10 ac, gently undulating, seasonal crk, bore, fenced, well treed, clear areas, sealed rd, power passes front. \$35,000. Ph: 03-5971-2934.

**AGNES WATER HINTERLAND**, 75 ac, 150 sqm floor area, 3 b/r, 2 storey c/a dwelling, 240 V solar. Four seasonal crks, 1 perm, + dam, 10 ac black alluvial soil. Beach, nat pks & sml towns 20 mins. \$120,000. Ph: 07-4974-9710.

**SUNSHINE COAST** (Cooloolabin), 30 minutes to beaches, 12 minutes Yandina. School bus, 7 acres, rainforest, permanent creek, waterfalls, swimming holes. Very private. Fruit trees, comfortable solar home, 6x9 m shed. Photos available. \$185,000. Ph: 07-5446-8319.

To avoid disappointment ensure  
your ad meets our deadline

## PROPERTY FOR SALE QUEENSLAND

**SOUTH EAST QLD**, mins Tamborine r/forests, unique dbl brick/log home on secluded timbered 4.1 ac, tranquil setting, 2 lge b/rs, + huge wood lined loft, lge nth window, attractive balustrade & truly ample storage. Dining with fireplace. Beautiful new sap-edge solid timber kitchen. Lounge, Jontul 'System 80' fireplace in 10' brick surround in conversation pit. Cathedral ceilings & skylight. Writing room. Fitted Berber carpets & slate floors. Bath, sep toilet. Assorted variety young f/trees, estab gardens, many valuable trees, flowering shrubs & plants. Two garden sheds with cement bases. Garden flush toilet (brick), lock-up brick firewood shed with pump & garden taps, 7 water tanks, excel catchment (conservative total capacity 25,000 gals), + 2 dams & excel bore with solar pump & panels. Industrial type Colorbond 3 car garage (11x7 m), power & workbench, concrete floor. Also brick & tile dbl garage, concrete floor & 3 lge windows. Pleasing building layout, good 'Feng Shui'. For more info ph: 07-5543-6196, or 07-4683-3378 evenings.

**BLACKBUTT (SE Qld)**, 5 1/2 ac, excel scrub soil, gently sloping north aspect, rural views, sealed road frontage, power and phone avail. Close to school, 25 mins Nanago, 2 hr Brisbane, caravan on block. \$23,500, offers considered. Ph: 07-5463-2993 AH.

**KILLARNEY, SOUTH-EAST QLD**, 180 ac r/forest, 360° views, rich soil, high r/fall, ph connected, very private, wilderness overlooking Condamine River headwaters, \$30,000 hoop pine standing, views sensational. \$90,000 ONO. Ph: 07-4664-4167, 014-890-006.

**HINTERLAND RETREAT**, uncompleted house, 1/4 acre, 1 hr Hervey Bay. \$18,000. Ph: 07-4129-6294.

**FAR NORTH QLD**. Imagine awaking daily on your 19 ac r/forest retreat to the sound of chattering birds followed by a breakfast on the timber decking overlooking a serene valley & extensive views. Three b/r clayblock home featuring Tasmanian oak & stained glass kitchen, skylights, fans, air conditioning & potbelly. Concrete shed 12x7m, suitable for tradesman or handyman. Iron shed suitable for storage. Irrigated orchard awaits planting. Fenced paddocks for stock. Abundant wildlife for the nature lover. Local shop, PO, primary school & high school bus 7 km. Close enough to picturesque beaches, the Great Barrier Reef and top fishing, 20 km sth of Innisfail & 90 mins from Cairns. For further details ph: 07-4065-4801 evenings.

**KINGAROO - WONDAI, OLIVE FARM**, 40 ac, all new fencing & solar elec around orchard, several hundred olive trees, 2-3 yrs old, 3 dams, iron-bark & spotted gum bush. \$50,000 ONO. Ph: 07-4168-9376.

**QUEENSLAND - JULATTEN**, 30 mins from Pt Douglas, 7 acre share in 44 rainforest f/hold acres, incl 2 b/r approved house, bathroom and septic. Seven acres incl running creek, ponds, waterfall and gravity-fed water. Assorted fruit trees, orchids, ferns and palms. Sealed access road. Price \$95,000. Ph: 07-4094-1560.

# GRASSIFIEDS

PLACING AN AD?  
See page 71 for details

**COOYAR** 3 km on bitumen rd, bush, 9 ac, alluvial flats & well-treed ridges, secret valley, fenced, dam, wildlife, very pretty. Small, neat, highset, Hardiplank house, power, ph, septic, verandah. \$60,000 ONO. Ph: 07-4692-6224.

**WEST OF GYMPIE**, 200 ac f/hold cattle grazing block. New fences, bore, windmill, 2 dams, timber plantation, 150 natives, well estab. Great scenic views. \$65,000. Ph: 07-4774-6995, 07-4779-2253.

**TROPICAL TABLELANDS**, 10 acres, crystal clear perm mountain stream, platypus habitat. Plus additional seasonal creek with small dam. Ravenshoe township 11 km on bitumen road, all services. School bus to primary, secondary schools. Atherton 52 km, Cairns 2 1/2 hours. Phone, power, fenced, views, town water plus 7000 gallon (2) concrete tanks. Chemical-free old grazing land, now regrowth forest. Secluded, wildlife abounds. Clean air. Five acres frequency free. Rates \$700 pa. \$59,000. For more information and colour photographs, phone owner: 07-5494-2946 (at Maleny). Ravenshoe contact: 07-4097-7273.

**NORTH-WEST OF BRISBANE**, 205 ac, 2 dwellings, f/trees, grapes, figs, irrigation. Mains power. Ph: 07-4665-3538, or write to: PO Box 187, TARA, 4421 Qld.

**ONE THOUSAND & TEN ACRES** timbered pasture land. Roads on 2 sides, dam. \$45,000. Ph: 07-4665-3538 or write to: PO Box 187, TARA, Qld 4421.

**MURRAY UPPER**, 25 mins sth Tully, 41.6 ac, cleared, fenced, power, bore. Improved pasture. Mountain views. \$130,000 ONO. Ph: 07-4066-5690 after 5pm.

**TARA**, 30 acres plus small 2 bedroom house, 4 car garage/workshop, 2 dams, large solar power system, all pumps, generator, gas fridge/stove/hot water service. Phone connected, school bus, 25 km to town. Friendly established neighbourhood. Private sale \$38,000 ONO. Ph: 02-9692-0815.

**BUNDEBERG**, Rosedale/Baffle Creek area, 40 ac, plenty of trees, several potential dam sites. Partly fenced, power, ph. Tank water. \$35,000 ONO. Ph: 07-5496-3073.

**CREEKS, WILDLIFE**, tall timbers. (Valley near Warwick.) Adjoining state/national parks. Choice 3 blocks starting 125 acres for \$68,000. One block has power. Ph: 07-4666-6179.

**MILLAA MILLAA**, far nth Qld, serene, secluded r/forest block, 232 ac, 90% r/forest. In tropical tablelands between Cairns & Innisfail. Abundant water, soil grows anything, 1/2 share with new 20x20 shed. \$15,000. O King, C/- PO Box 1867, CAIRNS 4870.

**SUNSHINE COAST** country living, 10x16 m pole house with infill walls of handmade adobe blocks plus paved verandahs, on 2 acres with long creek border, fruit trees and vegie garden, 3 bay carport, 7x8 m clayblock office, bitumen road and school bus to town. Ph: 07-5486-5230.

## VICTORIA

**RIVER OPPOSITE**, 2 bedroom 12 sq cottage, slate/polished floors. Park-like 1/4 acre. Historic Warburton township 10 minutes. \$76,500. Ph: 03-5966-2795.

**COWANGIE, NORTHERN MALLEE**, 20 km east Murrayville, 3 b/r, w/b, gas heating, air cond, wood stove in kitchen, town water + tanks. Four ac, fully fenced, 3 lge sheds, school bus route. Ideal for self-suff couple/family. Close to nat pks. Giveaway \$25,000. Ph: 03-5092-1152.

**BEAUFORT**, near-finished 3 b/r relocated w/b house on pretty 20 acres, 5 acres forest adjoining large forested area, 12 sq open-plan, wood heater. Dam, dbl steel garage, fenced, horse yard, power through block, estab garden. Suit handyperson/owner builder. Town 5 mins. \$52,000. Ph: 03-5155-3351 AH, or 041-244-0159 BH.

**RAINBOW, SOLID CEMENT-BRICK** cottage on 1/4 ac block in the town, 3 b/r, lounge, kitchen, bathroom, laundry, lge shed, under cover dbl parking, f/trees, front & back verandahs, town water, sewer, tanked drinking water, air conditioning, o/fplace & gas heating, schools, hospital in town. \$38,000. Ph: 03-5395-1035.

**RED GUM COUNTRY**, 40 ac natural bush, dam & bus. Close to Glenelg river. \$26,000. Ph: 03-5562-3085.

**EAST GIPPSLAND**, new house, 31 ac, beautiful forest. Solar & 8 KVA diesel power, 2 dams. \$75,000. Ph: 03-5826-5385.

**MUD BRICK COTTAGE**, double-storey, 4 ac, 2 b/r, alternative power, orchard, dam. Landsborough. Ph: 03-5472-5014.

**SOUTH GIPPSLAND**, 15 km nth of Leongatha. Secluded 2 1/2 ac, 5 b/r, study, 2 bathrooms, family room, kitchen, dining, lounge room, laundry, lge verandah to relax on. Carport, 20x40' workshop, shedding, school bus. Fantastic position & superb lifestyle. \$130,000. Ph: Janette & Marcel, 08-8388-9876 (owners living in SA).

**WEDDERBURN**, 60 ac property, 6 y/o house, 2 dams, orchard, swimming pool, dble garage, 4 big water tanks, native trees, great views, on main rd, 7 km from town. \$95,000 ONO. Contact: Miss A Henry, 03-5494-3401.

**CENTRAL VICTORIA**, 20 ac, concrete brick home, concreted verandah all sides, white Colorbond roof, 2 b/r, spacious living area, gas cooking, solid fuel s/c/heater. Ample water - big dam & r/water storage - all weather access, bitumen rd to within 300 metres. Picturesque, undulating, well treed, quiet hideaway. Solar power, 5 KVA generator back-up, power avail. School bus. Chemical-free for 18 years present ownership. \$77,500. Graeme Male RE, 87 Napier St, ST ARNAUD 3478. Ph: 03-5495-2522, or AH Graeme Male 03-5495-1989, Kevin Waite 03-5495-1977.

If you're sending in an ad, please,  
please, please put your phone number  
in the correct format. ie: 00-0000-0000.  
We need to know where your area code  
ends and your ph number begins!

# GRASSIFIEDS

## PROPERTY FOR SALE VICTORIA

**GREAT WESTERN – GRAMPIANS AREA.** Picturesque, views, power, seclusion, 172 ac (72 ac native bush & wildlife). House, 3 b/r, combustion heating & cooking, power, ph, gardens, orchard. Large dams, 30,000 gal of tankwater, 26" r/fall, 3000 sq ft of modern shedding (some set up for kennels or cattery). Extensive fencing, has run horses, cattle, sheep, goats & ostriches. Also suitable for viticulture, permaculture or other alternatives. \$150,000. Ph: 03-5354-2554.

**SEVEN HECTARES BUSH** block Hurstbridge, 1 hr Melbourne. 'Land for wildlife' property, with roos, echidnas, wombats, 60 species of birds & many native plants. Three b/r, weatherboard & Mt Gambier stone house. Mains elec & water + 2 tanks. Very lge living room with Coonara, study, kitchen, bathroom, en suite, verandah/greenhouse, cellar, laundry, 2 toilets. Beautiful views to ranges. \$250,000+. Ph: 03-9712-0545.

**HOBBY FARM,** 71 ac, dams, fenced, 2 b/r cedar house, elec/gas/solar, 40x20 garage. Beautiful views. \$105,000. Ph: 03-5772-2564, Alexandra.

## TASMANIA

**GLADSTONE, NORTH-EAST,** 1015m<sup>2</sup> building allotment in friendly rural town, services incl power, ph & town water, situated 20 mins from sea. \$5000. Ph: 03-6353-2322.

**WESTERWAY – ONE HOUR HOBART,** enjoy superb views of Derwent Valley, river and seasonal snow fields on this 1 acre block overlooking sml township. Very private and secluded, no neighbours, excel soil, with all amenities. Mt Field Nat Pk skiing resort 7 km. \$9500 ONO. Ph: 07-4129-2020.

**SEASIDE SERENITY,** privacy, shelter, 45 mins from Launceston, \$17,900 ONO. Reduced from \$24,500 for rapid sale. Clearing in 1 ac coastal bush, 300 m from unspoiled beach, next to golf course. Move into caravan, 2 sheds, u/ground power, ph, water tank. Serenity, sell below cost, photos, video. Ph: 03-6382-6100.

**COSY TWO BEDROOM** brick/timber 9 sq cottage, 15 mins from Sheffield 'tourist town of murals', en route to Cradle Mtn. Set on 20 ac cleared volcanic land with 1/3 timber. Good fencing with 3 sml paddocks and 1 outbuilding. School bus 1/2 km away, mail roadside daily delivery. Sheffield has PO, vet, surgery, chemist, bulk health foods, LETS system, banks, crafts, museum etc with Lake Barrington for fishing, bushwalking, skiing. Devonport city is 45 mins away with TAFE colleges, art gallery, large library, beaches etc. Cottage has mudbrick interior wall, brick & paver floors, s/c/stove, Hot Drum heater, woollen drapes, small gas fridge, ph, basic 12 V solar system. Mains power connected to neighbours property. Rainwater tanks (20,000 gal) feed vegie garden, house, fruit & nut young orchard. An underground spring is at bottom of property. Cottage was a successful craft retail studio. Cheap council rates. Very healthy, clean environment. \$85,000. Ph: Susan, 03-6491-1080.

DEADLINES: GR 129 – AUGUST 30TH  
GR 130 – OCTOBER 30TH

**ELLENDALE,** near New Norfolk, 50 ac, dam, partly cleared, some fencing, close to Russell Falls Nat Pk. Genuine sale. \$50,000 ONO. Ph: 03-5968-8656, 03-5968-1447.

**HAD ENOUGH HEAT,** noise, stress, people, equity/cash gap? Sell up, come build on my 15 timbered acres in cool, beautiful, low-priced Tasmania. Self-support for years on the price differential. Own boat mooring, river to sea. Five mins sealed road to thermal pool, shop, fuel, tavern. It's great down here mate! Also 1/4 acre. Ph: 03-6298-1692.

**KING ISLAND,** for private sale 'Nugaram Stud'. They come no better, 46 ac of some of the best land on King Island. Ideal retirement block with the capacity to earn an income. House set amongst lge est orchard, approx 130 apple & pear trees. This very private block offers magnif country living yet only 3 km to town. House approx 20 sq with 4 b/r, study & lge living area. Plenty of shedding, stable, good stock yards & lge barn. Lots of improvements done on house, pasture & orchard. Has good history of growing out beef & thoroughbred horses. Inspection highly recommended. POA. Ph: 03-5655-1065.

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**FIRST HOME OPTION?** Spacious en suite van, annexe, verandah. Organic garden. Large site, open plan farm park. Beautiful Margaret River area. \$18,000. Details, photos: Williams, PO Box 33, COWARAMUP, WA 6284.

## COMMUNITIES/SHARES

**GRAVEL RIDGE AIRFIELD,** retirement village. Near Dalby, Qld. One acre blocks with power. \$15,000. Ph & fax: 07-4668-2174.

**WE SEEK LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE** who desire a soulful & sustainable lifestyle on the Sunshine Coast. We are a mature, warm hearted, spiritually & environmentally minded couple who have experience in farming, building & healing. Subdividing & sharing could bring our mutual dreams into reality. Contact: Sandi & Ian Hodgkinson, 07-3300-9917.

**CRESCENT HEAD, NSW,** 2000 ac, mountains to running wetlands, ocean 1 km, Beranghi Community now forming. Share \$6000 to \$16,000. Ph: 02-6653-4601.

**FAR NORTH COAST,** 35 km NW Lismore. Beautiful solid spacious home, wide verandahs, elevated position, extensive views, 4 acres, under house garage & workshop. Organic gardens, f/trees, complete privacy. Power, ph, cabin, u/cover caravan. Secure strata development. School buses. \$159,000. Ph: 02-6633-7033.

*Please print your ad clearly  
so we can do likewise*

**NORTH NSW,** 250 ac with sea views. Located between Gold Coast and Byron Bay. Springs, perm cks, r/forest regenerating, 120 ac cleared but unused for 15 yrs. Borders nat pk on 2 sides. Roads all over the block, 4 sep valleys and 11,000 V power to be connected. I will be subdividing 2 x 100 ac + blocks off the back and keeping 25 ac at the front. The 100 ac blocks are suitable for Community Title applications, and I am interested in talking to people who wish to work to this end. I intend to plant the property out with plantation bamboo (for edible shoots, etc) and so like-minded people would be ideal. Long-term prospects are excel & should provide income for all after the initial set-up period. Ideally I would like to sell 1/4 shares in the 100 ac blocks for \$45,000 (they are worth over \$190,000) and can help organise good quality inexpensive housing. Some vendor finance may be avail to the right people. The goal is to have some fun and make some money. Call Michael on: 02-6677-0080, or write to: PO Box 773, TWEED HEADS 2485.

**NAMBUCCA HEADS** 1/2 hour, affordable land, 1200 ac. Backs onto state forest, 1/2 share in mostly native forest, 20 ac crk flats, 2 ac relatively level house site, cabin, ph, 4000 gal r/w/tanks, dam, f/trees, all year crk, swimming holes. Was \$45,000 now \$33,000 ONO, must sell quickly. Ph: Monica & George, 02-9973-1580.

## BUSINESSES FOR SALE

**GENERAL STORE** servicing beautiful Towamba Valley, 30 mins from Eden. Fuel, gas, stock feed, groc, newsagent, PO, videos. No opposition. Shop attached to 5 b/r house on 2 ac f/hold land, sheds, gardens, f/trees. Potential for improvement. Enjoy GR lifestyle with income. \$189,000 ONO. WIWO. Ph: 02-6496-7140.

## PROPERTY WANTED

**FAMILY SEEKS SMALL ACREAGE** with dwelling, within 2-3 hours Melbourne. Close to school/shops. Vendor financed/rent/buy preferred. Please contact: Rod or Cathy, on 03-9431-3362.

## WANTED TO RENT/CARETAKE

**HANDYMAN/CARETAKER,** seeking board and lodging, in exchange for help around the farm/home. Single n/s, n/d, 50, honest, trustworthy, all offers considered. Ph: Ray, 02-6646-4075.

**QUIET LIVING MATURE AGE** individuals (two) seek rental accommodation – farmhouse or cottage in the Strathbogie, Euroa or Violet Town district. (Both persons are long-time residents of the Euroa-Strathbogie district.) Please ph: 03-5790-8625.

**COUPLE, LATE FORTIES,** seek caretaking/house sitting position Qld/NSW. Carpentry, handyman, gardening. References provided, police clearance. Ph: 0417-183-901.

# GRASSIFIEDS

## WANTED TO RENT/CARETAKE

**GEMFIELDS, CENTRAL QLD.** Genuine caring person required for cosy homestay: 2 b/r house & 2 dogs to look after while I'm overseas (Sept - mid Nov '98). Handyperson an advantage. Ph: 07-4985-4462 evenings.

**FAMILY OF FOUR** requires a house in return for caretaking. Ph: 07-5484-1131.

**WANTED: FARMHOUSE** on acres, reasonable rent, Dungog, Paterson area. Wayne Lethbridge, 11 Penrose St, EDGEWORTH 2285.

## FOR RENT

**CREATIVE, NATURE LOVING HOUSEMATE** is needed to share beautiful, organic solar powered property at Christmas Creek, Lamington, Qld. Ph: Jo, 07-5544-8258.

**TUBBUT, EAST GIPPSLAND**, 3 bedroom house, furnished, ideal for home garden or organic growing. Clean air, surrounded by national parks, close to school. \$80 p/w. Ph: 02-6458-0253.

**BATEMANS BAY** (30 km), 100 ac, 5 b/r furnished house, c/vans, organic garden beds, f/trees, chicken house, smll cattle yard. Ideal for retreats, health centre or grassroots alternative living. \$120 pw. Ph: Maureen, 02-9750-0760, or 015-659-261.

**TWO BEDROOM HOUSE** on 5 ac, perm crk, 12 V & gas. Kyogle 20 mins. \$95 pw. Ph: 06-6321-128.

**GEMFIELDS**, central Qld. Genuine caring person required for cosy homestay: 2 br house + 2 dogs to look after while I'm overseas (Sept - Mid Nov '98). Handy person an advantage. Ph: 07-4985-4462 evenings.

**MUDBRICK, TWO-BEDROOM** + garage & sep hut - lots wildlife. RMB 1167C, MAJORCA. 3465.

## WANTED

**CARETAKER WANTED FOR REMOTE** idyllic Cape York property. Abundant wildlife and water. Must have own caravan or tent. Small wage, free rent and food. Apply manager, PMB 1030, COOKTOWN 4871.

**PERSON(S) TO SHARE/CARETAKE** 30 ac Lower Hunter bush block, vegetarian, n/s preferred. Visitors welcome. Ph: 02-4938-2036.

**SMALL ACREAGE**, country property, suitable for self-suff required in north or NE Victoria. Reply: Kristina & John, PO Box 193, MULGRAVE 3170.

**I AM 30 YEARS OLD**, I'm going walking with pack donkeys for a few months, seeing Victoria, camping, working for a meal sometimes. I am looking for someone to come with me. Ph: Debbie, 08-8723-2971.

**MINERALS/FOSSILS**, semiprecious stone for lapidary work. Decorative minerals and fossils for collection. Any attractive Australian material considered. Examples include quartz, amethyst, agate, chrysoprase, etc. Peter Hunt, Nature's Workshop, PO Box 53, NORTHCOTE 3070. Ph: 03-9482-2677. Fax: 03-9481-1393.

## PLACING AN AD?

See page 71 for details

## HANDCRAFTS

**CRAFT WORKSHOP VIDEOS:** Learn at home at your own pace from your personal, highly qualified instructor. VHS titles include spinning, weaving, beadwork, basketry, applique, tatting, knitting, crochet, lacemaking, felting, fabric painting and more. For full catalogue send long SAE to: Quick Spin Wool, Dept GR, RMB 1215, Shelford Rd, MEREDITH 3333. Ph/fax: 03-5286-8224.

**HAVING DIFFICULTIES OBTAINING** small gauge brass screws, hinges, catches, and associated brass fittings? We have an extensive range of 0g, 1g, 2g, 3g, etc from 1/4" long to 1". Also various woodworking tools, glues and abrasives. Backed up by a sharpening service. Send \$3 for catalogue (refundable off 1st order). East Gippsland Saw Service, PO Box 1168, BAIRNSDALE 3875. Ph: 03-5152-1001. Fax: 03-5152-1001.

**WAX SUPPLIES** for all crafts, candle, beeswax, sealing wax, sculpturing & colour dyes, wick, polish and advice. Ring or write: Handful Wax, PO Box 87, LAKE MUNMORAH 2259. Ph: 02-4358-1224.

**BEADS! BEADS! BEADS:** Unique selections of handmade glass, metal and wooden beads. Also findings, threads and kits available. Cost \$8 for samples, colour copy and info. Write to: Tsunami, PO Box 29, MARGARET RIVER 6285.

**THREAD BUNDLES**, \*\*Clearance sale\*\* Stranded cotton in bundles of 100 x 8 m skeins in 50 assorted colours. Shades matched to DMC - \$20 post free. The Big Bundle of Stranded Cotton of 240 colours - \$50 post free. Weaving reeds from 80c inch avail 8, 10, 12, 15 dents + post. Send 45c stamp for free price list. B/card, M/C, Visa, M/O, Chqs. Arty & Crafty, PO Box 40, DAW PARK, SA 5041. Ph: 08-8277-3763. Fax: 08-8276-2185.

**PAPERMAKING KITS**, come complete incl hand-crafted mould & deckle frames, instruction video etc. Make beautiful handmade paper at home. Suitable for computer/photocopier etc. Fun & rewarding. Contact: Tracy, ph/fax, 08-8854-4137.

**ARTISTIC HANDMADE CARDS**, reflecting colour and the beauty of nature. \$3 each incl postage. Chris Hardy, 32 Cross St, BLACKHEATH 2785.

**DRIED FLOWERS**, various Leucodendrons (Protea), long stems. Ph: 02-652-2686.

## HEALTH & BEAUTY

**NATURAL DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS** at discount rates. Oxichel, Emugen - Herbanol, Pharmalliance Products. Please send \$5 and SAE for sample tablet tray and brochures to: Brian O'Riley, PO Box 1351 MURRAY BRIDGE SA 5253, or ph: 08-8531-1411.

**COMPLETELY NATURAL SOAP/N'STUFF** - for complete catalogue send 2x45c stamps to: Ayilwen Garden, PO Box 42, YARRALUMLA ACT 2600.

**ORGANICALLY GROWN TRADITIONAL** herbal remedies for everyday conditions: arthritis, psoriasis etc. For catalogue please send SAE to: Tintagel Herbs, PO Box 27, CENTRAL TILBA, NSW 2546.

**HANDMADE PURE VEGETABLE OIL SOAPS.** For a product brochure send SAE to: Bushcraft Soaps, Lot 3, Counter Rd, MS 591, GYMPIE 4570.

**HEALING**, Australian bushflower & gem essences avail. \$8 for 15 ml bottle, incl postage. Chris Hardy: ph, 02-4787-5332.

**CONFUSED?** Discover purpose in life. Get control now. Write: Jon, PO Box 665, KATOOMBA 2780.

**MAGNETIC FIELD THERAPY.** Medical magnets for arthritis, sports injuries, headaches, neck shoulder, feet, legs & back problems. Ph: 02-9587-2920 AH.

**HOMOEOPATHIC KITS** to assist your child's natural immunity. Covering 0 - 5 years. Full instructions incl. Send SAE for more information, or \$45 incl postage for kit to: SL Products, PO Box 22, SOUTH CAULFIELD 3162.

## FOOD AND KITCHEN

**EXCALIBUR DEHYDRATORS.** Dry up to 20 kg fruit etc per day. For free info contact: EXCALIBUR, Box 203, TOLGA, Qld 4882. Ph/fax: 07-4093-3754.

**YOGHURT MAKER**, makes 1 lt yoghurt using Decor Dairy. Cost \$28 incl postage within Australia. Novum Plastics, PO Box 192, FERN-TREE GULLY 3156. Ph: 03-9752-5666, fax: 03-9752-6827.

**BEE POLLEN**, no additives, 450 g sample pack \$10. 1.9 kg pack \$35, 4.3 kg pack \$70, 14 kg drum \$185. Prices include p&p. JM Read, 8 River St, MURRAY BRIDGE, SA 5253.

**HOME STONE FLOUR MILLS** - mill your own stoneground wholemeal flour for cakes and bread at home with a Retsel Little Ark stone flour mill. Endorsed by Housewives Association. Write for catalogue to: Retsel Distributors, PO Box 712, DANDENONG 3175, encl 3 postage stamps. Ph: 03-9795-2725. Distributor enquiries welcome.

**KEFIR, CULTURED MILK PRODUCT** Extraordinaire! Simply add kefir grains to milk or soya milk, strain through a sieve after approx 2 days, and the result is a delicious yoghurt type food/drink. Kefir grains look like smll cauliflower florets, are re-used each time & will last indefinitely. Can also be 'rested' in fridge for weeks. Very healthy & extremely easy. \$20 for grains & instructions, price incl p&p to: J Seeger, Mapleton Forest Rd, MAPLETON, Qld 4560.

**Make Your editor smile -  
Punctuate when writing ads for  
Grass Roots Grassifieds**

## MISCELLANEOUS

**RADIATION-FREE SMOKE ALARMS**, battery (\$45) or mains (\$52), photoelectric, postage \$4.50. Ph: 03-5154-0151. 3D Lights, RSD GOONGERAH 3888.

**I CAN BUILD YOUR DREAM HOME** for you (East Gippsland). Log cabin, rammed earth etc. D R White (Reg 4988), 105 Hazel Rd, KALIMNA 3909. Ph: 03-5155-4608.

**CAN YOU USE A SPANNER and screwdriver?** Three different almost unknown businesses you can run from home. No opposition. I've retired so the secrets can be yours. No canvassing or mail order. Start with \$50 capital. Details free. Send SAE to Peter Gardner, 13 Harlequin St (PO Box 571), LIGHTNING RIDGE 2834.

**TRIDENT TIPIS**. Professional workmanship, quality materials, traditional designs. For brochure, samples and prices write to: 'Earth Mother Craft', Lot 107, Cedar Creek Road, via MILLFIELD, 2325. Ph: 049-981-659.

**TIPIS**, 10'-22', FROM \$460. Colonial tents, tarps, awnings, annexes, canopies, tonneau covers, swag rolls. Leather, deerskin, suede clothing, any size, any design, yours or ours. Western and Indian style fringed gear a specialty. Wholesale prices. Bojo Products, BENALLA. Phone: 03-5762-2145, mobile: 015-048-196. Tipi hire avail.

**NATURAL SKIN CARE PRODUCTS**, hand-made soaps & candles. Send SAE for catalogue of over 120 products. Forest Edge, 242 Albert St, MARYBOROUGH 4650.

**GREYWATER SYSTEM**, easy to construct and fully tested. Council approved (Lismore NSW). Combines a treatment unit and seepage/evapo-transpiration system. Plans and specifications available at \$50 per set from: Sustainable Greywater Systems, PO Box 176, NIMBIN 2480. Ph/fax: 066-891-703.

**QUALITY PET PRODUCTS**. For a catalogue please send 4 x 45c stamps to: Country Canines, PO Box 19, COORAN 4569.

**MICRO HYDRO**, Pelton wheel generator, 12 volt DC, complete with controller-regulator, 200 metres of cable & conduit, fusebox, wiring, no batteries, \$2000 ONO. Ph: Andrew, 0418-571-684.

**CREATE A WIND MACHINE** from recycled materials - prototype. Pumps 5 kl per day, 6 m head, light wind. A genuine DIY system, plans/instructions/ideas. Send \$30 cheque, m/order, payable to: DMD Recycling Systems, PO, ONGERUP, WA 6336. Allow 3 wks delivery.

**ARE YOU LOOKING FOR PENPALS** worldwide? Want to make money from home? Do you collect stamps, coins, cards? Have you a fascination for wildlife? Then write for free details to: TIC, Box 496, MORISSET, NSW 2264.

**PENFRIENDS**: Choose from hundreds of penpals Australia & overseas. For details send SAE to: Penlink, PO Box 303, BUSSELTON 6280.

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and you'll never miss out!**

# GRASSIFIEDS

**DEADLINES: GR 129 - AUGUST 30TH  
GR 130 - OCTOBER 30TH**

**CANON SOLAR PANELS**. Latest technology at electrifying prices! Genuine five amps output. Equivalent to 80 watt Solarex & BP. \$499 to Grass Rooters only. Ph: Universality of the Sun, 0418-934-607.

**SELECTRONIC INVERTER**. Model SE-12/24, maximum output 2000 watts, true sinewave. \$999 to Grass Rooters only. Universality Of The Sun, ph 04-1893-4607.

**LISTS & DETAILS OF VERY CHEAP HOUSES**, with or without acreage, avail for beautiful, fertile western Victoria. Other areas avail soon. Send \$50 to: 7 Park St, MT GAMBIER 5290. Or ph: Debbie, 08-8723-2971 BH.

**WEST AUSTRALIAN YURTS**, kit homes & studios. Beautiful timber buildings designed to fit the natural landscape. Circular floor plan gives strength & spaciousness. Single or double storey. Frame kits from \$6500. For info ph: 08-9757-3873, Margaret River.

**ONE 40-CHOOK-EGG 'Poultry's'** (Peerless) Kerosene Incubator. Works well. Instruction manual incl. \$200 ONO. Ph: 02-6874-4928 evenings.

**LPG FREEZER**, 200 litres. Write to: Geoff Bean, RMB 9290, STRATFORD, Vic 3862. Include ph number.

**IS YOUR CHILD** having difficulty with spelling? Wooden letters provide another sensory (tactile) path to the brain to facilitate learning. Lower case, brightly coloured, durable. Total of 60 letters in a durable, divided box. Cost \$82 + \$7 p&p. Phone orders: 03-5988-8832. Marie Lockyer, Box 88, BLAIRGOWRIE 3942.

**HEALING RETREAT** in a tropical paradise, \$300 per week all inclusive. Ph: Whatsundays, 07-4945-7253.

**NATURAL SKIN-CARE**, handmade soaps & candles. Send SAE for catalogue. Forest Edge, 242 Albert St, MARYBOROUGH 4650.

**CLOTHING RETAIL & HIRE SERVICE**, Vic/NSW border. Time to move on after 20 years. \$175,000 WIWO. Lease neg. Ph: 04-1714-3386.

## COURSES

**COB EARTH BUILDING WORKSHOPS**: Sculpture a house from earth, including arches, shelves, niches. Make a cob bread/pizza oven. Five day workshops. Sat-Wed, or just come for the weekend. March 28-April 1, April 25-29, May 16-20, July 1-5, September 19-23. Contact: Edible Landscapes, ph: 07-3870-3872, fax: 07-3870-5890.

**HERBAL MEDICINE**. The School of Herbal Medicine, estab in Australia in 1985, offers a 1 year home study course. For details, write to: PO Box 2310, TOOWOOMBA 4350.

**LEARN THE DIDJERIDOO**. Easy lesson plan incl circular breathing techniques, plastic practice didje, tape and booklet + \$6.95 postage + handling. Ph: 03-5996-0151, 2 Wentworth St, CRANBOURNE 3977.

**EARTH BUILDING & LIFESTYLE** - Learn about building with rammed/poured earth, rendered straw bale, mud brick, associated products & lifestyle. Attend Starting Point Seminars in Earth Building Techniques; stay at Earth House B&B, or get yourself started with Starter Pack - A guide to building your house of earth. Contact: Cherie, PO Box 222, COCKATOO 3781. Ph: 03-5968-1686.

**PERMACULTURE DESIGN COURSES**. For SE Australia - Nov 29 to Dec 11. Weekend course 12th & 13th September. Enquiries: Hugh Gravestine, 02-6494-2014.

**CORRESPONDENCE STUDIES**. Diploma and certificate programmes, professionally recognised. Learn for personal interest or business practice. Select one brochure from: Aromatherapy, Vitamin & Nutrition therapy, Traditional Folk Medicine, Animal Medicine (The 'Green' Vet), Psychic Healing, Pre-school Childcare (Nanny-Minder), Safety & Security Counselling, Personal Psychic Development, Traditional Wicca. New course: 'Herbs For All Ways And Always'. Wiccan Home Studies, PO Box 138, SURRY HILLS 2010. Ph: 02-9319-6166 BH only.

**SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE?** Learn how with Jane & Andrew: Choose from eight modules. Send SAE: PO Box 374, BABINDA, Qld 4861.

**PERMACULTURE COURSE** in the Yarra Valley, basic gardening using permaculture principles. Plant management, ecology, composting & plant placement. 31st July - 18th Sept. 10am - 12, Fridays, 8 sessions \$30. Other courses in pruning, propagation, viticulture and landscaping. UYCH. Ph: 03-5967-1776.

**LEGAL WORKSHOP** - legal structures & options for owning land, communities, ethical enterprise & nonprofit organisations, incl MO, comm title, trusts, companies, co-ops, assns etc with Wroth Wall (solicitor): Sept 29, at Djanbung Gardens Permaculture, Nimbin. Ph: 02-6689-1755.

**INTRODUCTION TO PIONEER BUSH SKILLS**. Sept 5 & 6 at Red Gum Ridge, Eukey, via Stanthorpe. Learn to use adze, broad axe, crosscut saw, splitting shingles and forge work + much more. \$100 one day, \$160 both days. Some meals provided. Limited numbers, please book early. Ph: 07-4683-7169.

**BIODYNAMIC GARDENING & NUTRITION**. Introduction to the philosophy & practice of BD gardening, farming & its importance for human nutrition & planetary healing. Course comprises 5 Monday evenings in Oct/Nov in Sydney, Sat 24 & Sun 25 Oct at Hunter Valley Agricultural College, and Sat 7 Nov at Biodynamic Farm. Contact: Parsifal College, 307 Sussex St, Sydney 2000. Ph: 02-9261-4001, fax: 02-9267-1225, Email: parscol@ozemail.com.au

**EVENING & WEEKEND COURSES**. Creative Writing, Naked Eye Astronomy, Biodynamic Gardening, Art in the Steiner School. Also, f/time & p/time accredited courses in Anthroposophical Studies, Steiner Teacher Training, Steiner Kindergarten Teaching, Early Childhood. Contact: Parsifal College, 307 Sussex St, Sydney 2000. Ph: 02-9261-4001, fax: 02-9267-1225, Email: parscol@ozemail.com.au.



# GRASSIFIEDS

## COURSES

**SUSTAINABLE LIVING & FARMING** workshops. Spring series (Oct/Nov) incs permaculture, bushfood, organic vegetable growing, free range poultry, sustainable property planning. For brochure ph: Peppermint Ridge Farm. 03-5942-8580.

**EARTH BUILDING & ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN.** One day seminar & house tour. Richmond/Kurrajong area, NSW. Sat 10 Oct 1998, 9.30am to 4.30pm. Cost \$65 incs morning, afternoon tea & lunch. Ph. Anne. 02-4567-7269, or Barbara, 02-4572-1489.

## LIVESTOCK

**LIVESTOCK BOOKS:** *Natural Pet Care*, *Healthy Land For Healthy Cattle* (both by Pat Coleby), and *The Poultry Breeders Directory*. See last page of *Grass Roots* for ordering details.

**HILTON HERBS, HEALTHCARE** products for dogs & horses are now available in Australia. The range incl herbal mixes, individual herbs, Bach flower remedies & herbal products for external use. For product info or advice about natural remedies contact: Paula Kerslake, 02-4374-1047, or Anton Imports, 03-5944-3794.

**MEAT RABBITS, NZ White.** Californian, British Giant. Healthy, quality breeding stock for sale. 'Why Farm Rabbits' information booklet. Ph: 02-6558-8287.

**DEXTER CATTLE.** low maintenance small acreage. Stud quality grade females. Heath Hill Stud Ph: 03-5997-8323.

**CATTLE:** The British White Cattle Society of Australia Ltd, est 1983. New members welcomed. Get in on the ground floor now. Australian and imported bloodlines available. Enquiries to: PO Box 546, CABOOLTURE, Qld 4510. Ph: 075-496-8271 or 076-958-561.

## GARDEN AND ORCHARD

**LIQUORICE.** Grow your own, all enquiries: Liquorice, GR, MS 726, GUNALDA 4570.

**APPLE TREES.** Huge range of heritage and modern varieties. Desserts, cookers, ciders, crabs. SAE to: Badger's Keep, CHEWTON 3451, or ph/fax: 03-5472-3338.

**'TREES FOR FARMERS'.** [www.nativenursery.com.au](http://www.nativenursery.com.au). Mildura Native Nursery ph: 03-5021-4117.

**BAMBOO PLANTS,** lge range, best prices. Ph: 07-4129-4470, fax: 07-4129-0130.

**COMPANION PLANTING CHART.** Over 90 vegetables, herbs and fruits, including plants as insect repellants. **Sow When Chart.** Suggested sowing times for 100 vegetables, herbs and flowers. Mail order \$7 each + \$3 p&p. Plum Products (G), PO Box 120, Wards Rd, TAMBO UPPER, 3885.

**TREE GUARDS** all shapes/sizes from under 10 cents each. Bamboo stakes and weedmats. International Reforestation Supplies, 510 Bellbird Rd, BAIRNSDALE 3875. Ph/fax: 051-579-404.

### PLACING AN AD?

See page 71 for details

**WOODBIDGE NURSERY,** field grown perennials, species lilliums, hellebores, double primroses. For mail order list send 4x45c stamps to: PO Box 90, WOODBRIDGE, Tas 7162.

**TOBACCO SEEDS** selected from quality, best flavoured plants. Organically grown. Seeds and instructions \$5. E Madge, PO Box 114, POMONA, Qld 4568. (MS 626).

**FREE \$4.50 packet** of mixed gourd seeds when you purchase your new 52 page *Gourd Growers Handbook* \$18. Mixed packets, Ornamentals, Hardshells, Luffa sponge, Cannon Ball, Calabash, Bean, Bottle, Birdhouse, Goose, Maranka, Coloured Corn - \$4.50 packet. Minimum purchase \$9. Bulk pkt \$10 - 30 seeds. Giant Gourd mix - 9 seeds \$10 packet. All prices include p&p. Money back guarantee. Send your order to: The Gourdfather, PO Box 298GR, EAST MAITLAND 2323. Ph: 02-4933-6624. PS: Craft books also available.

**EARTHWORMS. FREE,** the most comprehensive catalogue of books on this subject. Send a business size SAE to: Worm World, PO Box 204GR, ROLLINGSTONE, Qld 4816. Ph/fax: 07-4770-7001.

**TOBACCO SEED. ORGANICALLY GROWN** (Virginian), cultivation and curing notes included. Send \$5 to Lyn O'Brien, C/- PO, BARMAN 3639.

**LOOKING FOR HERITAGE** or traditional fruits & vegetables? Join the Heritage Seed Curators Association. Our regular 'Seed Listing' winter issue of *The Curator* lists the sources for thousands of vegie, herb & fruit varieties. Our summer issue has major articles, tips and notes about saving heirloom varieties. Membership costs \$25 PA or \$18 for low income earners. Contact HSCA, PO Box 1450, BAIRNSDALE, Vic 3875.

**RAINFOREST SEED COLLECTORS** national link-up. Buy and sell local seed. Our newsletter has lots to offer. Local seed grows better and doesn't pollute your gene pool. Quarterly newsletter subs \$20, concession \$10. Offer local seed - free subs. RSC, Private Mail Bag, BELLINGEN 2454. Ph: 02-6655-2233.

**WATER CHESTNUT SEED,** premium quality, Hon Matai variety. Only 80c per corm + p&h. Comprehensive information incl. Tinkering Farm Produce, Lot 2 Kens Rd, NORTHCLIFFE 6262. For enquiries and orders ph: 08-9775-1062 after 5pm.

**GINSENG - GROW IT YOURSELF,** rootstocks avail Korean/American. Also Echinacea rootstocks. Info: Ted, 'Yesspec', Box 2, OMEO 3898. Ph: 03-5159-1575.

**UNUSUAL VEGETABLE SEEDS.** For catalogue send 5x45c stamps to: GGO, PO Box 908, GYMPIE 4570.

**ECHINACEA.** Fresh seed with sowing & growing instructions. \$4 posted. Seed list 2x45c stamps. Apple Cottage, RMB 834 BEAUFORT 3373.

**TAGASASTE SEEDS,** spring planting. \$1.25 per pkt + \$3 p&p. Polito, Box 588, CHILDERS 4660.

## HOLIDAYS

**LAMINGTON GLEN** - rainforest retreat, secluded cabin. Everything supplied except food. Ph: 075-544-8166.

**RUSSELL ISLAND LAND TOURS,** accommodation and no-stress holidays. Permaculture, fishing, canoeing, mountain bikes, horses, yacht trips - and more. Backpacker prices: Phone: CanoeWorld, 07-3409-1960. Or email: [trev@canoeworld.com](mailto:trev@canoeworld.com)

**MORUYA - FAR SOUTH COAST NSW,** romantic 1b/r and family 2 b/r bush cabins. Big open fires. \$250 per week. \$100 per weekend. Ph: 02-4474-2542, pm.

**ALLERGY-FREE HOLIDAY,** Pelican Lagoon, Kangaroo Island. Walking, swimming, fishing, birdwatching. Limestone house, no chemicals or zinc, safe for multiple chemical sensitivity, organic meals. Cheaper rates if helping with gardens or housework. Ph: 08-8553-7224 after 8pm.

## SERVICES OFFERED

**HOME PLANS.** 'The Earth Builders Plan Catalogue' (180 pages): 92 plans for handcrafted buildings (84 homes and 9 workshops, cabins, and carports) of mud brick, rammed earth, stone, poleframe, timber, poured earth, straw-bale, construction details; usable sample working of a home (12 x A3 sheets). Mail \$65 (p&p incl) to: John Barton - Building Design, 31 Sharp St, NEWTOWN, Vic 3220. Phone and enquiries to: 03-5222-5774 for fixed quote to draw and document your home plan. Bankcard, Visa, Mastercard, cheques accepted.

**MUDBRICK (EARTHWALL) TESTING** - certificate for council. Effluent Disposal design (AS1547) for domestic premises. Soil testing. Hackett Laboratory Services, 4/8 Bellbowrie St, PORT MACQUARIE 2444. Ph: 065-832-635. Fax: 065-837-453.

**SOLAR POWER SYSTEM DESIGN,** including full analysis of your energy requirements, specification of components & materials and customised circuit diagram. \$300 to Grass Rooters only. Universality of the Sun, ph: 0418-934-607.

## OPPORTUNITIES

**FREE ACCOMMODATION** on vineyard in SE Queensland for a viticulture/permaculture person. Reply to: PO Box 12, BALACLAVA 3183.

**CANOE WORLD.COM.** Turn your handyman skills into lifetime income. Free advertising worldwide. Email or phone Trev @ 07-3409-1960, 24 hours.

**SEEKING COUPLE** to run sml general store in Mountain Forest Community, East Gippsland, 3 hours south Canberra. Shop comes with new flat. Frontage onto trout stream. Need only purchase stock (around \$5000), rent \$50 pw. Established 5 years. Ph/fax: 02-6458-1502.

*Don't forget the deadline if wishing to advertise in Grass Roots*

# GRASSIFIEDS

## OPPORTUNITIES

**FREE ACCOMMODATION**, outrigger canoe fishing/building workshop, with every 'Income For Life' plan, set at: 'Self-Sow-Fish-Ency', our Russell Island fishing lodge. Ph: 07-3409-1960, website: [www.canoe-world.com](http://www.canoe-world.com)

**TWELVE MACHINE KITTING LOOMS**, stand and accessories, one Ashford spinning wheel and heaps of spares + a small library of *Design Knitting* and manual. Would suit creative person, a list of possible outlets and cheap suppliers. Write: Phillip Kaye, 1/12 High St, Seymour 3661, or ph: 03-5755-2598. Price depends on cost of freight + repairs to some looms.

## CALENDAR EVENTS

**SOUTH COAST FIELD DAY** for Sustainable Land Use and Sustainable Living. Land Use, Building and Technology, Forestry, Community and Cottage Industry. August 22 and 23rd. Bega Valley. Enq: 02-6494-2014, 6492-7306.

**'A BRUSH WITH THE BUSH'**, Oct 4, 1998. Cultural festival of art, music, poetry, writing and artists in the bushland environment of Warrimbirra Sanctuary, Remembrance Dr, BARGO, NSW 2574. Ph: 02-4684-1112.

**CRYSTAL WATERS PERMACULTURE** Village, 'the motivating edge' conducts 1/2 day permaculture and community tours on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of every month. Contact James on: 07-5494-4721 for info, or write to: 'The motivating edge', Crystal Waters, MS 16, MALENY 4552. Booking is essential.

**DOWN-TO-EARTH EXPO** 3rd - 4th October 1998. Caboolture Air Field, Bruce Hwy, Caboolture/Bribie Island turnoff. For city & country people, environmentally friendly lifestyles, things for the home, garden & health. Ph: 1800-671-588.

**SUNRISE FARM COMMUNITY**, W Tree 3885. Our 20 years anniversary & reunion for members, past members & friends to be held on Sept 26th & 27th, RSVP August 31st. Enq: 03-5155-0336, 03-5155-0399.

**OPEN DAY** 6th Sept, 30 km Wagga, Sturt Highway towards Narrandera. Working Clydesdales, food, entertainment, art, craft, antiques. Ph: Ron Judd, 02-6928-2215.

**WAGGA WAGGA** Alternative Expo, 7th & 8th Nov. Proceeds to youth charity. For info ph: Gai, 02-6925-2625.

**EUROA AGRICULTURAL SHOW**, 24th Oct, showcasing Strathbogie Shire & beyond. New stallholders/displays welcome. Enq ph: Neville, 03-5795-2198 BH, 03-5795-2769 AH.

**NATIONAL HOMEBIRTH CONFERENCE**, Oct 30 - Nov 1, Club Capricorn, Yanchep, WA. International & Aust speakers. Enq ph: Lisa 08-9330-1852.

**FIBRE NETWORK FESTIVAL**, Oct 10-12 Hurlstone Ag High School, Glenfield. Enq contact: Hand Weavers & Spinners Guild of NSW, PO Box 578, BURWOOD 1805.

**NATIONAL LETS CONFERENCE**, to be held on September 4th to 6th, at the Maleny Showgrounds. Enquiries ph: Diane, 07-5494-4047.

DEADLINES: GR 129 - AUGUST 30TH  
GR 130 - OCTOBER 30TH

**WORKING CLYDESDALES**, antiques, machinery, old crafts, mud bricks, carriage rides, music, animals, food (billy tea, jumbuck stew & damper) at open day: Aurora Clydesdale Stud, Wagga Wagga, Sept 6th. Proceeds to charity. Enquiries ph: Ron Judd, 02-6928-2215.

## CLUBS

**NATIONAL ALLERGY ASSOCIATION** of Australia (NAAA). Information, counselling, newsletter. For information and membership write to: PO Box 48, HARRIS PARK 2150.

**AFFILIATED DONKEY SOCIETIES** of Australia. For info on membership, magazines and help avail, write to: Mr Ralph Grinly, 18 Inverness Rd, SOUTH PENRITH, NSW 2750, and you will be contacted by the representative in your state.

## PUBLICATIONS

**'NIMBIN NEWS MAGAZINE'**, is a co-operatively run access magazine with articles & information from Nimbin and other areas. We cover concerns relevant to alternative lifestyles & others looking for the most sustainable way. We are one of the longest running alternative magazines & the Nimbin bioregion is at the forefront in the development of sustainable systems. As networkers we scan many mags for suitable & scarce information for our readers. Subscription: 6 editions for \$18, sample \$3.50. Back copies 5 for \$12 posted. PO Box 209, NIMBIN 2480.

**EARTHWORMS**. Books and videos on all aspects of worm farming: for profit, gardening, bait, waste management. Free list from: WormWide Books, 20 Forest Ave (G), KINGSTON PARK 5049. Ph/fax: 08-8377-2668.

**BOOKS, OLD AND NEW**. Send for general list. R Suters, PO Box 127, FIGTREE 2525.

**BOOKS, NEW AND OLD**. Australian, lifestyle, Pacific, biography, horticulture, gardening, outdoors. Lists avail. BA & JM Wallace, Box 325, PORTLAND 3305.

**'THE WIND IN MY FACE'** excites awareness of the wonders of nature. A diary with watercolours. Peaceful, relaxing reading. A4, hardback. Rawlhouse Publishing, 1141 Hay St, WEST PERTH 6005. Ph: 08-9321-8951.

**'AUSTRALIAN TOBACCO'**. How to grow, cure, treat and cut your own. A well researched book by John Van der Linden. Send \$15 (postage included) to Lyn O'Brien, C/- PO, BARMAN 3639.

**'GRASS ROOTS'** mags (20) & *Earth Garden* (7), \$3 each. Ph: 03-5784-9263.

Make Your editor smile -  
Punctuate when writing ads for  
Grass Roots Grassifieds

**'OWNER BUILDER' MAGAZINE**. Building a home? *Owner Builder* Magazine gives Grassroots people inspiration, encouragement and downright sound technical information. *Owner Builder* magazine is avail from newsagents or by subscription. \$24 for 6 issues. For more info write: 66 Broadway, DUNOLLY 3472. Ph: 03-5468-1899.

**'ALTERNATIVE PLANS AND PRODUCTS' 10th Edition Catalogue 1998**. The new catalogue contains a comprehensive listing of books, booklets, plans and infopacs covering alternative power generation, ethyl alcohol production, wind power, gas generation, solar stills, alternative housing plans, low voltage workshop set-up, appliance conversion, special batteries, mini work vehicle construction plans, home-based businesses, solar panel making, powered water pumps, water purification, biological building, chemical hazards, earth energy fields and geopathic stress, infrasound and vivaxus bands. Over 240 books, plans and infopacs in an A4 size stapled and bound book with order forms incl and free booklet for 1st orders over \$30. Other titles incl steam engine and methane gas generators, electric vehicle conversion plans, fuel cell construction, solar ovens and water heater plans, solar furnace, vortex tube plans, free energy machines, magnetic engines and generators. For your *Alternative Plans Catalogue*: Send \$5 cash or money order (within Australia only), overseas customers Aust \$10 cash or bank draft (payable at an Australian bank only). *Alternative Plans*, PO Box 487, ASHGROVE, QLD 4060, Australia. Or E-Mail [alterpla@gil.com.au](mailto:alterpla@gil.com.au) for your download of Catalogue stating Mac or Windows version required.

**'NATIVE STINGLESS BEES'** for profit or pleasure - how to get started, Pollination/honey potential in Queensland. Detailed info booklets, packed with photographs, diagrams. For free catalogue, send name, address & 45c stamp to: ANBRC, Box 74-G4, NORTH RICHMOND 2754.

**'NEW VEGETARIAN & NATURAL HEALTH'**, the magazine of the Natural Health & Vegetarian Societies. Subscribe today, \$30 yearly and receive: 4 vital magazines, discounts at participating health food stores and natural therapies practitioners, listed in magazine. Head Office, 28/541 High St, PENRITH, NSW 2750. Ph: 0247-215-068.

**'CHOOKWISE: A Self Sufficiency Guide to the Management of the Domestic Hen'**, by Linda Marold. A simple straightforward guide to chook care for beginners. Covers feeding, housing, problems and breeding. Written for Australian conditions. \$12 post paid anywhere in Australia. L Marold, PO Box 54, CASTLEMAINE 3450.

**'TOWARDS LIVING ALLERGY-FREE'**, a book for the healthier Australian house, its design & location. Shortcuts for reducing dust mite, mould & air pollution. Send \$12 to: B. Gibbons, 38 Durham Street, STANMORE 2048.

**FREE - COUNTRY PROPERTY CATALOGUE**, properties from only \$5000. Ph: 03-9852-3322.

# GRASSIFIEDS

## PUBLICATIONS

**'VOHAN NEWS'**, The Vegan-Organic Network (Horticulture-Agriculture). We welcome membership from everyone interested in ethical cultivation, food production & social justice. \$30 annually receive 4 issues annually. E-Mail [aura@zip.com.au](mailto:aura@zip.com.au), or mail: PO Box 384, EDGECLIFF, NSW 2027. The Vegan Society NSW, PO Box 467, BROADWAY 2007.

**SOLAR TECHNOLOGY DESIGNERS CATALOGUE** 1999. Now in its ninth year, this authoritative 160 page manual/catalogue is endorsed by hundreds of Grass Rooters & thousands of others, as their renewable energy bible. Written by leading solar engineer Christopher Darker in a unique easy to read style, it covers critical topics of energy self-sufficiency; formulating an energy budget, power system sizing, solar panels, trackers, wind generators, batteries, inverters, energy efficient appliances & a vast range of related issues. To order ph: Universality of the Sun, 0418-934-607.

**NATIVE STINGLESS BEES** for profit or pleasure – how to get started. Pollination/honey potential in Qld & northern NSW. Detailed info booklets, packed with photographs, diagrams. For free catalogue, send name, address & 45c stamp to: ANBRC, Box 74 G4, NORTH RICHMOND 2754.

**'VEGAN FORUM'**, subscribe today, \$30 annually, receive 4 magazines & newsletters from your state. E-Mail [aura@zip.com.au](mailto:aura@zip.com.au), or mail: Luis Rappaport, PO Box 384, EDGECLIFF, NSW 2027.

**'A VAST NEW REVELATION** by Jesus Christ, giving a picture of Christianity as it was meant to be'. For info send SAE to: PO Box 390, MORPHETT VALE 5162.

**'HOW TO SURVIVE** in the Tribulation'. This book explains simple survival without money or friends in the worst situations. Price \$15 from: M Prass, PO Box 423, DECEPTION BAY, Qld 4508.

## CONTACTS

### NEW SOUTH WALES

**CARETAKER WANTED**, quiet, n/s, single middle-aged man offers share house/farm. Please write: Paul, PO Box 2, RAPPVILLE 2469.

**SELF-EMPLOYED BUSINESSMAN**, 50, lives on 150 steep, wooded acres in Central West in lovely, large 'countrified' house with lots of great 'feel'. Tertiary educated, I am interested in photography, music and bushwalking. My goal is to devote more time to the property with a view to self-suff, and less to my business. Divorced, I have 1 child who has moved away from home, and I wish to share my dream with someone compatible. Is there a Christian lady out there 35 - 45 (children welcome), who loves nature, would like to live an isolated life, n/s, s/d, who shares my interests and my dream? Please send photo. All letters answered. Trevor (GR 128), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3660.

**ECCENTRIC, HAPPY FEMALE**, 22 years old, seeks fellow humans for love, life, laughter &/or letters! All replies answered. To: FJ (GR 128), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

### PLACING AN AD? See page 71 for details

**LADY 50**, FSC NSW, slim, 5'6", seeks an honest, active, well mannered country gentleman, 50 years, n/s, s/d, who likes dining out, travel, movies, walks. Contact: Gemini (GR 128), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**COUNTRY MALE**, 48, slim, n/s, n/d, quiet & easygoing, not in rat race, seeks lady to share simple life in small country village. 'Sagittarius' (GR 128), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**FILIPINA LADY**, early 30s, seeking a marriage-minded man, who is loving, sincere & genuine interest. Photo appreciated. Address: PO Box 373, MERIMBULA, NSW 2548.

**CHRISTIAN SINGLES ALL AGES**. All denominations. Send for free colour brochure to: PO Box 122, WALLSEND, NSW 2287, or [www2.hunterlink.net.au/singles](http://www2.hunterlink.net.au/singles)

**CORRESPONDENCE SOUGHT** by reasonably attractive and youthful 39 y/o lady who values a simple life filled with laughter, sharing and honesty. There is currently a large void in my life which I would like to fill with discussions on 'life, the universe and everything'. I'm interested in science, natural history, philosophy, life...!! I'm seeking a literate, gentle caring man (n/s, n/d) with whom to exchange ideas, thoughts, small gifts and humour during a slowly evolving friendship (patience is essential!). Jane (GR 128), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

### QUEENSLAND

**WISHFUL PISCES LADY**, with Monty Python sense of fun. Needs tall, sincere, adventurous male companion, 60 - 65, n/s, s/d, to share open spaces, peace and all the things that make a happy heart. J (GR 128), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**LIBRAN MALE & AQUARIAN FEMALE** seek bi-woman (air or fire sign) for intimate r/ship. Looking for an independent, joyous woman interested in natural farming lifestyle who wants an alternative to the cultural norm of a single spouse & children. M & C (GR 128) C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**SINGLE WORKING MAN**, 33 years, n/s, n/d, quiet, like to contact compatible Christian oriented lady similar age. No objection children. Kevin Neal, PO Box 6010, EAST BUNDABERG, Qld 4670.

**EXTRAORDINARY** 39 y/o woman living in nth Qld seeks someone who loves 'Course in Miracles', moonlight, Mother Earth, trees, joy & Janni. Love is all! Grace (GR 128) C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**MALE**, gay, late 40s seeks guy share 5 ac property Atherton Tablelands. Fabulous climate, grows anything, 1 1/2 hrs Cairns. Genuine ad for permanent r/ship. AT (GR 128), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**COUNTRY GENT**, n/s, n/d, 60, 5'8", 170 lbs. Seeks slimish lady to share alternative lifestyle. LD (GR 128), C/- PO Box 117, Seymour 3661.

**MALE, FORTY-SEVEN**, n/s, seeks lifelong companion who is disenchanted with the materialistic tendencies and destruction of our Earth's natural beauties, who would like to start life afresh together conceiving a cottage by a flowing creek with log fire, vegie patch and chooks. The first stage may involve purchasing a motor home for the domestic search, followed by a backpackers' type adventure further afield. It is essential that you are a n/s and that you believe in a Higher Guiding Force. Preferably (hopefully?) you are short, slim to cuddly and dark haired. If you like the concept that 'Love is the absence of Fear', I look forward to your reply. 'Quell', (GR 128), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

### PLACING A CONTACT AD?

If you do not wish your address to be published, you may prefer to have replies sent C/- PO Box 117, Seymour 3661 (our address) and we'll forward them (unopened) to you. There is a nominal charge of \$5 for this service, so please add this to the amount when calculating the cost of your ad.

### VICTORIA

**FINALLY I'M READY** – lover & friend wanted, down-to-earth yet spiritual, interested in earthy things and universal questions, city dweller with self-suff aspirations, 40 - 60, over 5'9", financially secure, for tall, slim, professional woman of European origin – photo appreciated. Vic pref, NSW or SE Qld OK. Please write to: Cancer (GR 128), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**SINCERE, LOYAL LADY**, age 40, would like to correspond with gentleman with similar interests. Gardening, animals, art, picnics, country drives & bushwalking. Write: Chris (GR 128), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**EAST GIPPSLAND AREA MALE**, 43, 6' tall, n/s, n/d, loving and caring, looking for a friend, lover & soul mate. Must be financially secure, spiritually aware and slim to medium build. Drop me a line & I'll tell you more. Photo appreciated. All replies with a phone number answered. WC (GR 128), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**ENLIGHTENED, SLIM, SOBER**, n/s, affectionate male, establishing spiritual retreat in Qld, requires spiritual mature female partner. She could be: aware, wholistic, total, solved or solving her past karmas through looking inwards, rediscovering true Self. Unafraid of end-less longing for sharing love, great reverence for Higher Self, showing it in body and spirit. Interested more in Being than behaviour. Enjoyment of simple things. Capable of permanent r/ship with genuine intimacy. Contact pref with astro sign & photo returned in conf. Anutosh, 33 Joan Ave, FERN-TREE GULLY, Vic 3156.

**FEMALE**, 28, n/s n/d, vegetarian mother of 2, seeking bushwalking companion/s. Have some experience, plenty enthusiasm! Day hikes initially, aiming towards weekend trips. Melbourne area. Male/female okay. Wendy: 03-9380-8059.

# GRASSIFIEDS

## CONTACTS

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**NATURAL WOMAN**, happy, fit, articulate, well travelled. Seeking friendship/r/ship with an honest, warm, natural, intelligent late 20s - early 40s man. Are you down-to-earth, positive & able to share your thoughts & feelings? A willingness to develop a trusting & mutually supportive r/ship is important. Interstate replies welcome. Nicole (GR 128), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**HILLS DWELLER**, Perth, female, 45, outgoing, affectionate, creative, educated, seeking energetic male 40 - 50+ with *Grass Roots* interests. BG (GR 128), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

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# Poetry

## NIGHT SOUND

*Unknown squeaks of unknown pasts  
make their intermittent  
noise across the background  
play of wind.*

*Unrhythmical, grating  
metal across metal  
in brittle breathing.*

*high blown reminders  
of tomorrow's  
maintenance work.*

**Lorraine Marwood**

## WINTER IN LOVE

*Moon's setting  
Sun's rising, I know that but can't see it  
Fog rises  
In the distance, on the forest edge  
Jewel drops fall.  
Birds cut through misty sunrays  
Grey gums ghosts stand still  
Creek murmurs  
Wooden platform  
Tin roof  
No walls  
Crisp breath  
There is moisture in the air  
and in my eyes*

**Sergio Jacomy**

## WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE SUN ROSE THIS MORNING?

*Where were you before dawn broke this morning  
Out on the track with the whip birds a calling  
Tucked up in bed still soundly snoring  
Or watching above, the Sea Eagles soaring*

*Where were you in the soft glow of the morning  
Down on the beach feeling the waves crashing  
Snuggled up asleep, harbouring thoughts of passion  
Or going over rock platforms sending crabs madly dashing*

*Where were you when the sun rose this morning  
Up on the cliffs, beholding majestic clouds towering  
Afraid of the cold, still under sheets cowering  
Or out on the heath with the flannel flowers flowering*

*Where were you when the sun had risen this morning  
Surveying the distant city wrapped in a brown smoky haze  
Fixing tea and toast whilst still in a daze  
Or crossing the creek under the grey heron's gaze*

*Where were you as our world warmed this morning  
Scouring the seashore as the tide crept forwards  
Sipping your tea, feeling your life going backwards  
Or refreshed, revitalised, and feeling rewarded*

*Where were you when the sun rose this morning?*

**Pat Joseph**

## SPRING JOURNEY

*Frozen dead winter,  
transcends to freedom,  
held within an unknown summer.*

**Ilge Fritaag**





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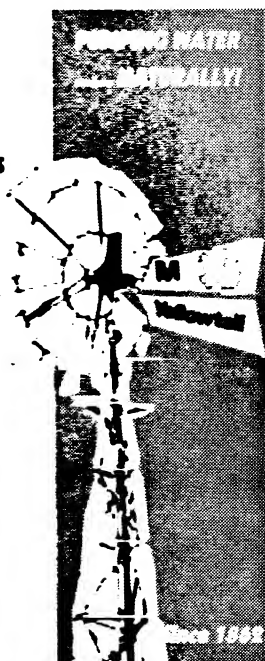
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